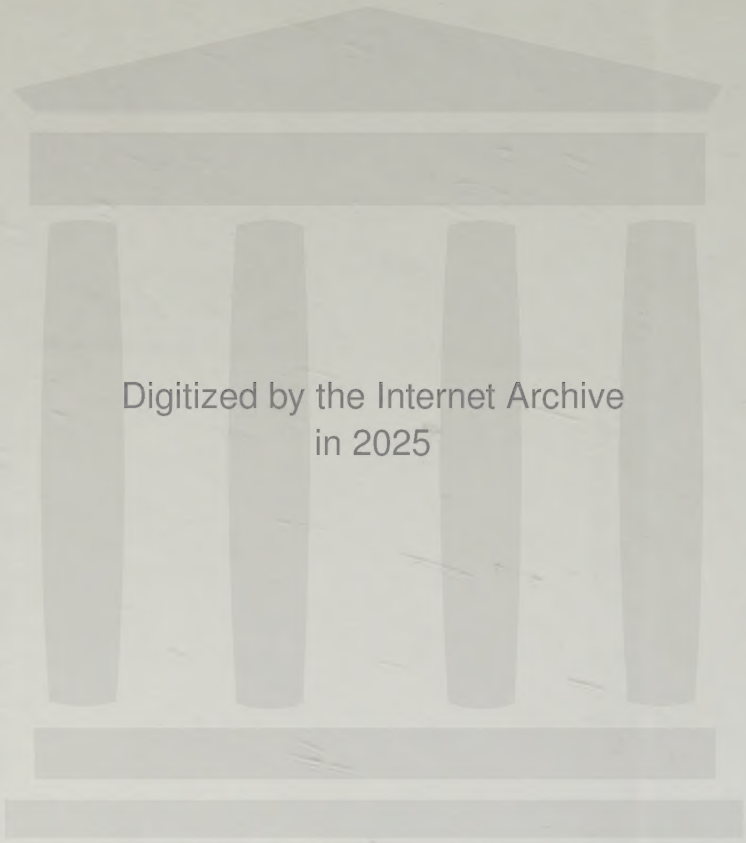
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BY

C. LEWIS HIND

AUTHOR OF 'ADVENTURES AMONG PICTURES,' 'REMBRANDT,' ETC.

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TO

G. R. HALKETT

The author is indebted to Mr. Martin Colnaghi for the use of two of M. Pineda's copies of pictures by Velasquez in making the colour blocks of "Prince Balthasar Carlos" and "Antonio of England"; also to Mr. Allen Deacon and Mr. George Murray for their copies of "The Maids of Honour" and "The Infanta in Red"; also to the Editors of the Pall Mall Magazine *and* The Daily Chronicle *for permission to reprint portions of articles.*

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DAYS WITH VELASQUEZ

CHAPTER I

FORGOTTEN

It is August 15, 1660.

Velasquez has been dead nine days.

This incomparable artist, who was also Palace Marshal to Philip IV., never recovered from the fever contracted on that tiny island in the frontier river Bidasoa, where the Spanish and French Courts assembled to marry Philip IV.'s daughter to Louis XIV. The building of the Conference House and the arrangement and direction of the Spanish ceremonials were among Velasquez's duties as Palace Marshal. Perfectly he performed them, for in Diego Velasquez Spanish dignity, taste, and refinement flowered into their finest blossom. We read in Palomino, his earliest biographer, of the elegance and nobility of his personal attire; of his costume trimmed with Milanese silver braiding; of the pretty bride, Maria Theresa, who in tears left

the country of her birth, to be married to a man unknown to her, and wafted away in pomp and majesty to an alien land; of Philip, an old, unhappy King, beset by the nightmare of a disastrous past, who had found a second wife in his beloved dead son's betrothed, Mariana of Austria. She was fourteen years of age; he, thirty years her senior. But it is Velasquez — grave, observant, ubiquitous in his silver-braided dress with the Red Cross of his Order upon his cloak—who dominates that brilliant scene around the Conference House in the Bidasoa River: Velasquez the painter, who has given immortality to Philip and all his brood.

Seventy-two days was Velasquez superintending the nuptial festivities. After his return to Madrid he refers to himself, in a letter to a friend, as "worn out with travelling by night and working by day, yet in good health." At the end of July he had an interview with King Philip, and retired, feeling the fever on him, into his own apartments by that passage though which Philip passed when the mood was on him, which was often, to talk with his favourite painter.

Velasquez died on August 6.

It is August 15, 1660. A secretary brings to the King a document referring to the salary of

1,000 ducats of his late Palace Marshal. Philip takes the document, pauses, and writes with a trembling hand in the margin: "Quedo adbatido" (I am overcome). Professor Carl Justi, who has written the authoritative *Life* of Velasquez, to the pages of which I am much indebted, has seen this document in the archives of Simancas.

Five years later Philip IV. died unregretted, leaving the record of a miserable reign and a diminished empire. But he also left hanging upon the walls of his gloomy palaces an array of portraits and pictures by his Palace Marshal that have made his reign famous, and the features of himself, his wives, his children, his brother, his Minister, his dogs, his buffoons, his jesters, better known to us to-day than the looks, costumes, family, and belongings of any other dead King.

Philip grieved for the loss of Velasquez his friend. Maybe for a few years the accomplished Palace Marshal was remembered; but Velasquez the painter! How strange the fate of this great master!

For a hundred years he was forgotten; for another hundred years he was just, now and then, remembered. Spain took little heed of her greatest son, and the Bourbons even less—those Bourbons who

ruled in Spain when the death of Charles II., Philip IV.'s weakling son, in 1700, ended the male line of the Spanish Hapsburgs. "No one suspected," says Professor Justi, "that in the far west, in the palaces of Madrid and Buen Retiro, lay concealed the credentials of an artist who possessed full claims to rank with the foremost of the great masters."

The fire at the palace in 1734, in which some pictures by Velasquez were burnt, added confusion to neglect. The very titles of his works were forgotten or mislaid. Even the name of Spinola, the hero of Breda, passed into oblivion. Ponz, whose *Journey in Spain* was published in 1772, was told that the "Surrender of Breda" represented the Marquis of Pescaro receiving the keys of some stronghold. Velasquez was unknown to Englishmen of the eighteenth century. Spain was not included in the Grand Tour. The planet of Raphael blazed: his kingship was unquestioned. Velasquez slumbered.

Velasquez waited. The time was not yet ripe for the canonization of him whose body in 1660 had been wrapped in the modest shroud, and then clothed "as in life, according to the custom of the knightly Orders, with the mantle worn at chapters

and the red badge on his breast." This Spanish gentleman, who had never sought fame, whom Rubens liked because of his modesty, who was the most courteous, gentle, and accomplished knight that ever used brush, could wait until the world had received the new knowledge.

Before the year 1855 no book dealing separately with Velasquez had been issued. Pacheco, his father-in-law, in his *Arte de la Pintura*, published at Seville in 1649, supplies brief accounts of the early life of his son-in-law, whom he admired immensely, including a description of Velasquez's first journey to Italy, probably derived from letters which have not been preserved. Palomino, the "Spanish Vasari," gave some space to Velasquez in his biography of certain painters published in 1724, and King Philip's favourite artist is treated courteously in the sonorous periods of that master of the grand manner, Sir William Stirling Maxwell, in his *Annals of the Artists in Spain*, published in 1848. But the recovery of Velasquez from oblivion was slow and halting.

To-day he is a prince among painters, acclaimed by every authority, studied by every serious student.

The influence of Velasquez upon the art of our

own times, which may be said to have begun when Henri Regnault, writing from Madrid in 1868, described him as "the first painter in the world," has long penetrated to every capital, and is manifestly the strongest influence in modern painting. I recall Sir Joshua Reynolds's generous testimony: "What we are all attempting to do with great labour, Velasquez does at once." I open a volume published last year—Mr. George Clausen's *Lectures on Painting*—at the chapter entitled "Titian, Velasquez, and Rembrandt," and read: "It seems almost an impertinence to speak at all of men who are above discussion or praise, whose names alone suggest the finest painting, and each of whom in his own way has reached the limits of achievement."

I remember that at the close of my first week in Madrid (it is only at Madrid that you can realize the sweep and subtlety of the genius of Velasquez) Charles Furse suddenly appeared in the vestibule of the hotel in the Puerta del Sol. Our meeting was fortuitous; but, if I had been given my choice, there was no Englishman I would sooner have met than Charles Furse in the city where Velasquez lived and worked for forty years. The knowledge that he had but a few months to live was mercifully hidden from Charles Furse,

who was then on the radiant crest of his achievement. He had hurried from the Riviera to realize one of the dreams of his life—a week of companionship with the sixty Velasquez pictures at the Prado Museum. We walked together through the sunny streets of Madrid, cooled by the breeze from the Guadarrama snows, to the brick and stone Prado Museum. Never shall I forget the profound effect produced on my companion by his first dart round that huge circular room hung entirely with the works of Velasquez, and by the sudden discovery of that inner chamber where Velasquez's masterpiece, "The Maids of Honour," hangs solitary, beyond competition, undistracted by the claims of rivals.

Day after day we visited the Prado together; but always at the entrance to that circular hall, above the door of which the one word "Velasquez" is inscribed, we parted. The way of such enterprises must be trodden alone. Nevertheless, hardly an hour passed but he would come hastening to me, unable to control his enthusiasm, impelled to express the thoughts that stirred in his brain at the sight of those pictures. When I left Madrid, he was proposing to forego his engagements in England to stay in Madrid and copy Velasquez.

From Henri Regnault to Charles Furse, from the painter of "General Prim," who visited Madrid in 1868, to the painter of "The Return from the Ride," who hurried to the Spanish capital in 1904. Those visits, the enthusiasm of those two accomplished artists, are significant. Velasquez is the painters' painter. He has been reinstated by painters. It is they who have recovered him; it is they who have given him reverence and his due; it is they who have placed him with his peers.

Writers, too, share the honours: Professor Justi, who has treated Velasquez as exhaustively as M. Emil Michel treated Rembrandt; Sir Walter Armstrong, who in his succinct, practical, and illuminating *Portfolio Monograph* gave an authoritative setting to the chronology of the pictures; the late R. A. M. Stevenson, who, a painter himself, produced in his small volume on *Velasquez* the most luminous exposition of the painters' craft, at the topmost point of its evolution, that has ever been penned; Señor A. de Beruete, who ransacked the archives, made discoveries, and doubted accepted ascriptions; and Mr. Charles Ricketts, who wrote a learned and lively volume on the collection in the Prado Museum.

Stevenson was wholly for Velasquez. His is a significant, indeed an epical, book, and might well have been the last word. But Mr. Ricketts, while giving freely an artist's worship to Velasquez, flies the Italian flag, the banner of Titian, against the Spanish; and those who care for comparisons may choose and be welcome. By predilection of temperament and training, I am for Velasquez.

When the tercentenary of the birth of Velasquez fell, in 1899, he had come triumphantly into his kingdom. This Spanish painter, with "the surest eye and the truest hand of any artist who has ever lived," had, two hundred and thirty-nine years after his death, achieved a European reputation.

This was the man who, as a youth of promise, had journeyed from Seville to Madrid to seek his fortune, and whose recognition was so quick that his first portrait of Philip IV. was publicly exhibited in the street of old Madrid known as the Calle Mayor, over against St. Felipe. Was Diego born under a fortunate star? Perhaps. Perhaps it is nearer the truth to say that he was a man of genius who always did his utmost, and was befriended because he was modest, quiet, and serious. It

is obvious that he was fortunate in his early critics and patrons. The criticism of Olivares, Philip's powerful, plump, and emphatic Minister, upon this portrait has a savour that any artist, however unassuming, would esteem. His Excellency the Count Duke, after examining the work, exclaimed that the King had not till then been painted at all.

This was the man who, at the age of forty-one, on the occasion of the bull-fights in the Plaza Mayor, was given a place, according to the strict Spanish etiquette, on the fourth-floor balcony among the secretaries of the Court officials, and conterminous to the barbers of the chamber. We can be sure that no querulous protest came from the grave lips of Velasquez.

This was the man who, having been well-nigh forgotten for nearly two centuries, came to be regarded, towards the end of the nineteenth century, by universal consent, as one of the great triumvirate—Velasquez, Rembrandt, and Titian—who sit on the summit of the painters' Parnassus. "Nine out of ten," says Sir Walter Armstrong, "who understand pictures would call Velasquez the greatest painter, and Rembrandt the greatest artist in paint."

Forgotten

A man may be famous in his circle of intimates, and entirely unknown to the outside world. In England we move slowly. We do not readily accept new ideas. The daily press may publish columns of amazement and congratulation about the alleged discovery of spontaneous generation; but not until a decade later, when the Quarterly Reviews consider the subject soberly and at leisure, do we feel that the finger of official sanction is upraised in blessing. Therefore, when in 1901, two years after the tercentenary of the birth of Velasquez, the *Edinburgh Review* appeared with an article headed "Velasquez," reviewing the works of Carl Justi, R. A. M. Stevenson, Walter Armstrong, and A. de Beruete, it was realized that Velasquez had come into his kingdom. Great Britain, through one of her Quarterlies, had acknowledged his claim.

Certain lines in that able and industrious article riveted my attention. The thing that needed to be said was well said.

"After two centuries of neglect," wrote the anonymous Olympian in the *Edinburgh*, "Velasquez now occupies a position which is, we should imagine, without parallel in the history of art. He is no longer merely an old master; he has become a

living influence on modern painting. It is as if he had recently opened a studio."

True. "It is as if he had recently opened a studio." He is the painters' painter.

It is now 1905. His studio is still open, still thronged.

CHAPTER II

THE PAINTERS' PAINTER

WHY is Velasquez the painters' painter? Why has he such a profound and abiding influence upon so many modern artists? In part because he is the hierophant of that new knowledge which proclaims that it is worthier to paint perfectly what the eye sees than the vision that the aspiring heart conceives. The Italians strove to realize in paint the invisible dogmas of the Church, and a few, because they were men of genius, produced masterpieces. Velasquez, and some of the Dutchmen, painted life, and because they represented the colours of objects modified by the action of light, air, and distance, they produced masterpieces.

Years later, when "values came upon France like a religion," Manet uttered that great saying, "Light is the principal person in a picture." With all—with Holman Hunt, blind to values, as with Velasquez, seeing them constantly—it is the per-

sonality and craftsmanship of the artist, not the mysticism of the subject, that moves, delights, and stimulates us. When painting in France began to be considered scientifically, it was to Velasquez that the eyes of the pioneers of the modern movement turned. He was an example not only of great achievement but also of achievement that was reached slowly and grasped firmly. Examine his pictures chronologically, beginning with his dark, early manner, before he learnt that space can be decorated by the use of tone as well as by figures, the days when he painted the crowded and piecemeal "Topers" and "The Forge of Vulcan"; and you realize how gradual was the education of his eye and hand. Study his religious and mythological pictures, such as "The Adoration of the Kings," "The Coronation of the Virgin," and "Mars" at the Prado Museum; and you realize that even Diego Velasquez, when he was not painting a subject that he had seen and felt, was as other men. His imagination was not the equal of his eye.

He was no child prodigy. He began with the simplest themes, some *bodegone* or "kitchen piece" that he had seen in his father's house, or in the streets of Seville—an old woman cooking eggs, two young men at a meal, a water-carrier—

painting them with searching but simple realism, learning to appreciate (his eyes, not books or masters, were his teachers) the lights and shades of the tones under the influence of distance and atmosphere. This knowledge grew, and reached its culmination in "The Maids of Honour," where the beholder is persuaded that, by some enchantment, depth has been persuaded to visit a flat, upright surface.

In a word, he discovered, or rather stated with consummate skill, the incalculable importance of the science of values. Ordinary painters search for *les valeurs.* To the gifted eye, perfectly trained, they are as evident as perspective. Velasquez himself probably never used or considered the word values. It is the modern, the scientific, analytical modern, who has invented it to describe what Velasquez saw in the course of years by mere force of sight and will.

The appreciation of values may be defined as the power of a painter to see his subject as a whole before his brush has touched the canvas, to appreciate instantly, in the subject he has chosen to paint, the reciprocal influence of the lights and darks of the tones under the conditions of distance and atmosphere. Broadly speaking, it is

the truth or untruth of the values in a picture that makes the educated layman, as well as the artist, either like or dislike a picture. The ordinary man or woman has to be taught to see values, as he is taught perspective, because the ordinary eye is an incomplete instrument. The journeyman painter sees his picture in bits and patches, and when it is painted the scene remains a thing of bits and patches. The master sees his subject as a whole, appreciates, in one searching glance, the values of the tones, and retains that vision undisturbed until the picture is finished.

Time is a subtle begetter of atmosphere and therefore of correct values. The slow glaze of time has brought many a picture into value; but many are too outrageously incorrect for even time to soothe.

The appreciation of values is rare in ancient art; but when it is present the eye is charmed, because the illusion of atmosphere is given. It is the secret of our pleasure in Whistler's pictures. The absence of *les valeurs* or incorrect values is the reason why the majority of our early Victorian pictures are discordant. The drawing may be fine, the characterization alert; but if the values are wrong the picture is unpleasing. "The colour," says Mr. George Moore, "is the melody; the

values are the orchestration of the melody; and as the orchestration serves to enrich the melody, so do the values enrich the colour."

There were pioneers in Scotland and England who searched for values in the middle of the last century; but we did not follow the quest in the keen way of the logical French.

To-day the works of well-trained students may have many faults; but most are in value. They may not be able to design a picture, but they can get the right value of white lilies held in pale fingers against a white dress, and of breaking foam against a moonrise or beneath an August sun.

Values in Great Britain are now respectable, received in select circles, treated with respect in every art school. The *Edinburgh Review* has approved them. I open the April issue of this year, and read in a very capable article on the work of Whistler that his "Piano Picture" is important because "the values are correct"; also that "the school of values" has spread and spread till it now covers three-parts of the territory of art, and that Velasquez has become a patron saint of modern painting.

For fifty years Velasquez worked in vast rooms, lighted by lofty windows, in the King's palaces at Madrid. Through those windows streamed the light

of the clear Spanish sky; in those rambling rooms he had unique opportunities for studying the effect of light suffused and reflected on the sombre hangings, on the severe furniture, on the far-stretching floors, and in the dim heights of the chambers, where the light, mingling with the dark, lingered in mystery. When Philip stepped through the studio door Velasquez would note the value of the touch of orange in his dress against the braided silver of his doublet; the right relation of the paper he held to the hand that fingered it; the eloquent shadows that his figure threw upon the floor; and the appearance of tables, chairs, and easels, as modified by the impalpable blues and grays of the atmosphere, and the steady light that poured through the tall windows. It was through constantly studying this gray interior light, not through studying the dazzling sunshine loved by Claude Monet, that the eye of Velasquez learned to appreciate values. But they must be searched out with the same persistence around the figure of a girl selling oranges in brilliant sunlight on the Ligurian coast as about the figure of a Maid of Honour standing in the gray room of a Madrid palace.

The values in a modern sunlight picture should be as correct as the values in a nocturne by

Whistler, or as in one of his lovely Valparaiso pictures, where he just wafted upon the canvas a few pale sails against a sunset, and willed sea, sky and sails to fade away in perfect harmony.

It must not be forgotten that a Master sometimes intentionally breaks the law. Velasquez lowered the backgrounds of his equestrian portraits, so that they should not be higher in value than the figures upon which he wished the eyes of the spectator to focus.

The great draughtsman is born with the powers of a great draughtsman implicit intellectually in him. The fine colourist is born with the sense of colour implicit emotionally in him. A great seer of true values like Velasquez is cradled with the sense of them in his vision, a sense that is perfected only by unremitting labour.

"Get your values right," says the modern teacher of landscape, "and leave the colour to take care of itself." The student is taught to study with half-closed eyes the values of his chosen subject, and to mark them on his charcoal or pencil sketch, from, say, No. 1, the deepest dark, to No. 10, the highest light, the intervening numbers being allocated to the various ascending tones from dark to light.

This system of numbering dates from Turner.

You may see the progressive numerals on some of his pencil sketches in the National Gallery. When Corot saw a paintable subject on a railway journey, or when he was without his paint-box, he would make a rough sketch, marking the deepest shadow No. 1, the highest light No. 4, and the intermediate tones Nos. 2 and 3. Among the Paris-trained English painters in the last decade of the nineteenth century the search for values had become the quest of quests. Two artists, whose names are now familiar to all, tell me that, when they were ardent youths living in the country, their topic of conversation during walks was mainly the values of objects in the scenes that were unrolled before their eyes. To these friends, as to most of the younger men, Velasquez was *the* master; but they did not yet understand the significance of the edges of Velasquez. In the manipulation of his edges he is supreme, and the despair of his disciples and copyists. Compared with his edges, Mr. Sargent's are overhard, and Whistler's too daintily soft. It is the passage of one tone or value into another, by way of the edges, that gives atmosphere to a picture. Velasquez loses an edge, lets it wander, finds it again, makes it firm here, blurred there, and so passes on by degrees, that are almost

imperceptible, from tone to tone, and depth to depth.

Students are eager to visit the Prado Museum, because its reputation has been made by their fellow-craftsmen, and an artist naturally gives more weight to the opinion of an artist than to the judgment of a critic.

Raphael Mengs visited Spain in 1761, a century and a year after the death of Velasquez. This German painter, who can be described in no higher terms than as a camp-follower of the Eclectics, understood much, although his power of expression in art was feeble. "Painted by pure will" was the comment of Mengs on "The Maids of Honour." Fifteen years later he wrote to Antonio Pronz: "The best models of the natural style are the works of Diego Velasquez, in their knowledge of light and shade, in the play of aerial effect, which are the most important features of this style, because they give a reflection of the truth."

Strange is the effect of Velasquez upon the painter! "The Topers" is one of Velasquez's early pictures, and certainly not one of his greatest; yet O'Shea tells us that Wilkie, who visited Spain in 1824, would sit for hours before "The Topers" in silent and every day more intense admiration.

Those who have seen this picture in the Prado Museum are not surprised at Wilkie's admiration. Probably painted in his thirtieth year, under the nfluence of the exuberant talk and encouragement of Rubens, although ungainly in composition, and not executed as if Velasquez had seen the subject as a whole, it has such a sheer technical accomplishment, the observation of character and tone is so superb that Wilkie may well have spent hours before it trying to pierce into the secret of the Spaniard's power and method; and "at last, wearied with contemplation, rise with a sigh of despair." Goya, who, when he found he could not make enough by painting, performed in the bull-ring, valued "The Topers" in 1780 at 40,000 reals—about £416, a large sum in those days.

But it is John Phillip, that sound painter, fine draughtsman and colourist, who has royally earned the gratitude of those devotees of Velasquez who have not visited Madrid. It is the accomplished art of John Phillip that has shown to them the height of craftsmanship that Velasquez reached. I know of no finer copy of a picture than Phillip's copy of a portion of "The Maids of Honour" hanging in the Diploma Gallery at Burlington House. Here, indeed, even in the copy, is the delight of

right values. How fine and pure is the colour, the pearly quality of the Princess's dress, the exquisite infantile freshness of her complexion, the gamut of reds—in the pigment on the palette, in the Santiago cross, and in the reflection of the red curtain in the mirror! Confronted by John Phillip's copy, I can readily believe that I am standing in the Prado Museum and looking at the central portion of the original picture. That was a fortunate day when, in 1856, John Phillip made a long tour through Spain in the company of his friend, Richard Ansdell. Wilkie gazed at what he loved and admired, and retired with a sigh of despair; Phillip painted what he loved and admired, and gave us his magnificent copy of the Princess Margarita and her maids.

With Regnault and Manet as leaders, the rush of painters to the feet of Velasquez began. From the studio of Carolus-Duran issued, in all directions, ambassadors of the young, earnest, revolutionary movement in painting, which took "truth of impression as its governing ideal," and Velasquez as the Great Practitioner. The star of Whistler rose, and R. A. M. Stevenson, turning from painting to writing, gave to the world his analysis of the genius of Velasquez as craftsman and impressionist.

"Velasquez may have painted 'The Maids of Honour' how he pleased, yet he kept before himself a single impression of the scene, and therefore he succeeds in conveying it to the spectator."

Slowly Velasquez became an impressionist; slowly those piercing eyes learned to see the true relationship of the various tones to each other; slowly he learned to give effect to the harvest his eyes gathered; slowly he realized that colour becomes colour by the modification of light and atmosphere; slowly he completed and stated on canvas his lifelong studies of daylight in interiors, suffused and reflected, startling in the sobriety of their pearly realism; slowly he mellowed.

Slowly, silently, and surely he advanced into the position of the painters' painter. Leighton, always learning, devoted one of his last Discourses to Velasquez; and I remember the eager, absorbed attention of Browning, who for an hour and more sat motionless in the corner seat of the front bench, maybe meditating a poem, perhaps a dramatic monologue on that scene in Rome during Velasquez's second Italian journey in 1650, when the Romans gathered in the cloisters of the Pantheon to see the portrait Velasquez had painted of his servant and colour-grinder, Juan de Pareja, and

the painters who were present declared "that all else, whether old or new, was painting; this picture alone was truth."

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, wherever ardent artists congregated in this country or in France, Velasquez was discussed and honoured. The pupils of Carolus-Duran and Léon Bonnat —French, English, and American—carried the lessons of the Master to their homes. Many made copies of his works at Madrid, striving to understand the method of Velasquez, sometimes seemingly miraculous, of handling paint.

Finally, I realized to what extent Velasquez had become the painters' painter, when Mr. George Murray, winner in 1901 of the Gold Medal and Travelling Studentship of the Royal Academy Schools, elected to go, not to Italy, but to Madrid, to study and copy Velasquez.

We study and copy; but genius ever eludes. For behind his wonderful appreciation of values, and his supreme technical power, is the man himself expressing himself in the chosen medium. We may analyze and reason interminably, but in the end can but say that the picture, the tragedy, the symphony, are what they are because they are the expression of a Velasquez, a Shakespeare, a Beethoven.

CHAPTER III

AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY

When a man speaks of the public he usually regards himself as standing a little aloof from the herd, among the elect.

In writing of the public appreciation of Velasquez I range myself with the majority, with the herd; for my interest in Velasquez dates from the acquisition by the Government in 1890 of the three Longford Castle pictures, which included one fine Velasquez. Velasquez was indeed honoured in London that year; for 1890 also saw the opening of the Wallace collection, and the exhibition of "Venus with the Mirror" at the Old Masters' Exhibition. Then began, I think, a general public interest in Velasquez, stimulated by the fact that the Government, with the help of the magnificent contribution of £30,000 from private purses, had paid £55,000 to Lord Radnor for the three Longford Castle pictures—Velasquez's "Admiral,"

Holbein's "Ambassadors," and Moroni's "An Italian Nobleman."*

British newspapers published articles and crisp paragraphs on Velasquez, Holbein the Younger, and Moroni. The art world and the public—I one of them—for a long series of weeks flocked to the Umbrian Room of the National Gallery, where those three pictures were provisionally placed. That "robust intruder from an alien world of solid and literal humanity," that swarthy, grim, fierce portrait of Admiral Pulido Pareja, with the bushy hair and beetling brows, eager to be off to the fight, and done with this woman's business of painting, satisfied Velasquez himself, as well it might. That he was content we may infer from the fact that he signed and dated the canvas, a mark of approval that he rarely employed. Towards the left side are the words:

DID. VELAS^{Z} PHILIP IV. À CUBICULO EIUSQ' PICTOR. 1639.

When I saw this portrait, in 1890, standing in the Umbrian Room against a background of

* Messrs. N. M. Rothschild and Sons, Sir Edward Guinness (Lord Iveagh), and Mr. Charles Cotes, each contributed £10,000 towards the purchase of these three pictures. The balance (£25,000) was provided by the Government.

rhythmical Madonnas and suave saints by Raphael and Perugino—

> 'Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken.'

The Holbein and the Moroni were interesting; the Velasquez was absorbing. Never had I believed that blacks could be made so beautiful, or that the eye could dwell upon a shadow on the floor and find it holding the mystery of night. It was enough for a time to gaze no higher than the Admiral's knees, to peer about the ground upon which his feet are placed so firmly, noting the subtle value of the white bow that peeps from beneath the curve of the velvet breeches. When my eyes travelled upwards, and I saw the sobriety of the colour, the flash of the wide lace collar and brocaded sleeves, the crimson and gold scarf with the red enamelled decoration of the Order of Santiago hanging from his neck, and the subtlety of the velvet dress, I felt indeed that here was a new order in painting. Examine the gloved hand grasping the Admiral's staff! The veriest tyro cannot but feel that here is the perfection of drawing.

I withdrew as far from the Admiral as the length of the gallery would permit, and instantly

ADRIAN
PVLLDOPARIA

everything co-ordinated into the first impression that Velasquez had seen and seized of this Spanish soldier, defiant in the studio as upon the ramparts of Fontarabia—that first impression which Velasquez kept steadily before him until, with the famous long brushes, he flashed on the canvas the last touch, and nodded approvingly. As one stands before the vivid, impatient Admiral, it is not difficult to credit the story related by Palomino that "the King one day, paying his customary visit to the painter, mistook the picture for the Admiral himself, and rebuked him for tarrying in Madrid when he had been ordered away. Perceiving his mistake, he addressed Velasquez with the words: 'I assure you I was deceived.'"

This legend is credible, although the story has been told of almost every painter by almost every enthusiastic disciple.

Palomino gives a detailed history of this portrait, which also is signed and dated. Señor A. de Beruete, in his work on *Velasquez* published in Paris in 1898, argues that it is by Mazo, the pupil of Velasquez. If that be so, Mazo was an amazing painter, and one wonders why his other works are so commonplace.

Some years afterwards, when I stood before

Velasquez's "Crucifixion" in the Prado Museum, I recalled that it was painted in the same year as the "Admiral Pulido Pareja." These two pictures exemplify at once his reticence and his power to project himself into the personality of his subject. There is in the "Crucifixion" enough of Velasquez to confute the oft-repeated charge that he lacked imagination. It is just the gleam of the imagination of Velasquez passing into this figure on the night-enveloped cross "like an ivory carving on a black velvet shroud" that has haunted many who, at first glance, were not disposed to be impressed by his rendering of the "Crucifixion"—I mean the veiling of the side of the face by the long locks of brown hair. That half-veiling gradually seems to evoke a murmured message from the lips of Velasquez, like the linking shadows that knit the feet of the "Admiral Pulido Pareja," like the ray of light that streams from the ear of Christ to the heart of the praying child in the "Christ at the Column" picture, as if saying, "I hear your pity. It comforts me."

"Christ at the Column" was the second work by Velasquez that arrested me when, on that memorable day in 1890, I passed from the "Admiral" to the Spanish Room.

At the National Gallery

Satiated with the conventional rendering of Biblical scenes, I did not think it possible that I could be moved by another representation of an episode from the Passion; but there is a force, a simplicity, a distinction, about the work that captivated me, as one is captivated only when a work of art makes a clear call to the emotions.

In "Christ at the Column," as in the "Admiral" and in most of his pictures, Velasquez forces us to believe that we are looking upon the actual scene. It is an episode of the tragedy itself, not a sentimental transcript of an unrealized idea. We are present at the moment of pause after the scourging. The executioners have withdrawn without releasing the poor tied hands. Upon the ground lie the instruments of torture — birches, blood-stained leathern thongs, and twigs. At this moment the child, accompanied by her guardian angel, enters and kneels. Here again the human note is manifest. It is pity for the suffering man, rather than adoration of the God, that animates the childish face. The eyes of the angel are downcast, as if she cannot bear to witness the agony. That she is a woman, not a pious phantom of the imagination, enhances the reality of the scene. It was a pretty idea which once called this

work "The Institution of Prayer"—the ear of God listening to the cry of the human heart.

Those to whom this picture appeals love the gray cool blue of the floor, the blue of the child's dress, the luminously dark wall beyond, the stolid but most expressive angel, and the pale beauty of the face and flesh of the central figure. "Christ at the Column" has another interest. It is one of the few pictures for which Velasquez made a preparatory sketch. Usually he drew with the brush in paint, often altering the curve of an arm or the sweep of a hat and enlarging the canvas by sewing strips to it. In the Instituto Asturiano at Gizon there is a crayon drawing which has been identified as a study for the guardian angel of the "Christ at the Column."

The two large pictures by Velasquez that dominate the end wall of the Spanish Room—"Philip IV. hunting the Wild Boar" and "A Betrothal"—have a place apart in his achievement. I have never wanted to examine these decorative designs closely, or to puzzle out the meaning of their intricacies. It is enough to know that they are there, and to encourage the eye to roam over their spacious pictorial patterns. The title "Philip IV. hunting the Wild Boar" is self-explanatory;

but I doubt if a sportsman would make much of it without a paragraph of interpretation. The "Betrothal" picture is a delightful enigma. One certainly recognises in the lower figure the big spectacles and abundant hair of the poet Quevedo, of whom a half-length hangs in the collection at Apsley House. Does this picture, this darkly dazzling sketch, represent a betrothal? The description in the National Gallery catalogue, after tantalizing us with references to an unseen personage, to whom the characters turn, ends by doubting if it is really a betrothal, and suggesting that this bold, huge work is but part of a larger composition.

Originally the picture was called "Signing the Marriage Contract between the Infanta Margarita Maria, daughter of Philip IV., and the Emperor Leopold of Austria." As that betrothal was in 1664, four years after the death of Velasquez, the originator of this legend cannot complain that an age more attentive to punctilio has discarded his title. The explanation offered by Lord Savile, in a letter to the *Times* in 1895, is reasonable and pleasing. He suggested that the picture represents the betrothal of Velasquez's own daughter to the painter Mazo; that the Knight of

Santiago, who is seated at the table, is Velasquez himself; and that the picture was begun just before his death, the year when the Order of Santiago was conferred upon him. "A Betrothal" was formerly in the possession of Sir Edwin Landseer.

Gradually the truth about the family of Velasquez, as about himself and his art, has been revealed. For years and years people looked at the picture called "The Family of Velasquez," now in Vienna, content to believe that he was the painter of this curious, interesting, but not very capable group, and that the medley of children and adults represented his wife and offspring, with a portrait of himself painting at his easel. Velasquez, we know from the marriage certificate of 1634, had a daughter, Francesca, who was married to Mazo; and elsewhere there is mention of another daughter, Ignacia, who may be the original of the little girl in the Prado Museum. The archives make no mention of any sons. One has only to examine "The Family of Velasquez" to be confident that Velasquez is not the author of so hugger-mugger a composition. Some authorities ascribe it to Juan de Pareja, the servant of Velasquez, who taught himself painting

in secret, and astonished his master and King Philip one day by producing a picture, a good one, from his own brush.

Assuredly Mazo is the painter of this family group. It includes himself, his children, possibly some of his grandchildren, and his wife Francesca, whose portrait—a plump little girl with dark eyes, like the eyes of "The Lady with a Fan" at Hertford House—hangs in the Prado Museum. I hasten to add that the catalogue of the Prado Museum styles the portrait of this little girl "The So-called Daughter of Velasquez." The custodians of the Madrid pictures who mislaid the titles of them during the dark years of his neglect have much to answer for.

There is no doubt about the two portraits of Philip IV. in the National Gallery. Señor Beruete, the most ruthless of critics, who assigns the "Betrothal" to Luca Giodamo, and gives to Mazo, besides the "Admiral Pulido Pareja," many of the so-called Velasquez pictures in private collections in England and elsewhere, allows us the two Philips.

They face each other—this dandy Philip, nearing his prime, aglow with silver embroidery, and the Philip old and penitent, in black.

The full-length of Philip nearing his prime is interesting, as it marks the transition from Velasquez's early black, tight manner to the swift achievement of his later years, when technique became an inspiration, and atmosphere floated upon his pictures like water sprayed over a lawn. The hard, red curtain at the back is probably not his; but none else could have suggested the silver brocade of Philip's dress, with apparently arbitrary twirls and splashes of light paint upon a brown fabric; none other could have knitted, with those luminous shadows, the feet of the figure and the legs of the table together; only he could have set him there so firmly upon the floor, could have drawn in paint those gloved hands, or pictured the subtleties of that feathered hat. Here is the man himself, with the long Hapsburg face and the cold eyes, who cared little for anything but his horses, dogs, guns, and the society of his favourite painter. For nearly forty years Velasquez studied that pale, mask-like face, with the upturned moustaches, which Germany has appropriated, and the angular chin, almost resting upon the plain *golilla* collar, that Philip himself invented when he tired of the rich laces with which Spanish aristocrats encompassed their slender necks. This portrait was purchased

at the sale of the Hamilton Palace pictures. Sir Walter Armstrong does not accept it as being wholly the work of Velasquez. He suggests that it is a repetition by Mazo, which has been worked upon by the Master.

Surely no painter ever soared into notoriety from the shoulders of a father-in-law as Mazo soared. The appearance of King Charles's head in Mr. Dick's memorial is casual compared with the buzzing of Mazo about the brows of Velasquez.

Turning to the consideration of "Philip, Old," the half-length on the facing wall, we may admire and wonder, in complete assurance that the hand of Velasquez alone painted this masterpiece. It is not a head that evokes the instant admiration of the peripatetic picture scanner; it is not like a full-blown poppy in a field of barley, bending its graceful stem to every appreciator in turn, hiding nothing, offering all its flushed beauty to the momentary glance. The "Philip, Old" must be studied, must be wooed. Wooing may seem a wild euphuism to use in connection with the double chin, fat, rambling neck, pasty complexion, and bleared eyes of will-less, weary Philip—kind but weak, the average well-intentioned, sensual man, clothed by destiny in the garment of a King. It

is the art of Velasquez we must woo, not the fugitive subject of his genius. This is one of the four consummate portraits painted towards the end of his life, the fruit of half a century of explorations into the potentialities of his art, worthy to rank with its contemporaneous productions, the two portraits of children at Vienna, and that shimmering dream of colour, the "Infanta in Red" at Madrid.

The "Philip, Old" has weight. You can persuade yourself that if you took the head in your hands it would lie heavy. See with what easy draughtsmanship he in turn loses the line of the face, tightens it, and lets it wander again. To height and width he adds a third dimension. Walk away from the canvas: it is no longer a portrait of ageing Philip. He is alive, as on the day he sat to his Palace Marshal in the palace at Madrid.

I turn from "Philip, Old" to the little picture in the corner behind the door, called "Christ in the House of Martha," and sweep from Velasquez the master to Velasquez the beginner, who, seeking no short-cut, primrose way to success, began by painting simple things just as they are, copying with all the precision of a pre-Raphaelite, realizing, even in those days of pupilage, as by

instinct, that he was not merely copying fish, eggs, water-jugs, pestles and mortars, but translating examples of still-life and low-life (as humble life was called), under the influence of the light that quickens and beautifies them. Its simple and unaffected truth makes this picture of "Christ in the House of Martha" seem like a draught of cool water on a torrid day after some of the Murillos at the National Gallery, not the Murillo of the "Boy Drinking," the admirable piece that adjoins "Philip, Old."

"Christ in the House of Martha" is divided into two parts—a not uncommon device in the history of art. In the smaller section, a picture within a picture, we see Martha uttering her protest. In the larger group, Martha, "troubled about many things," is nagging the maid. Realism, simple and unaffected, could hardly go farther than the painting of Martha, the servant-maid, and the food upon the table. And is there not mystery in that scene in the little chamber which the wall has parted to disclose?

Velasquez cared little what he painted. Everything was good in his eyes: a plate of fish or butterfly soldiers marching through sunshine, an old battered woman or a little princess with a com-

plexion like the dawn. The light of day plays upon the just and the unjust, upon the so-called beautiful and the so-called ugly.

"Velasquez, in his early days," says Palomino, "took to representing, with a singular fancy and notable genius, beasts, birds, fishes, fish-markets, and toppling houses, with a perfect imitation of nature, as also beautiful landscapes and figures of men and women, differences of meats and drinks, fruits of every sort and kind, all manner of furniture, household goods, or any other necessary which poor beggarly people and others in low life make use of, with so much strength of expression and such colouring that it seemed to be nature itself."

In a word, he began by painting *bodegones*, such as the "Christ in the House of Martha" and the famous examples at Apsley House.

As I had never seen these, I applied to the Duke of Wellington for permission to spend an hour before his *bodegones* by Velasquez.

CHAPTER IV

AT APSLEY HOUSE

By the chances of war Velasquez is associated with the military history of modern England, and particularly with Joseph Bonaparte, King Ferdinand VII., and the Duke of Wellington.

It is the year 1813. The Battle of Vittoria is over, and the Basque province of Alava is thick with the flying figures of the French army. Ex-King Joseph has evacuated Madrid, carrying with him the Bourbon jewels, and pictures severed from their frames, rolled up, and secreted in his travelling carriage.

That laden carriage was captured by the Duke of Wellington; the spoils were tossed out upon the roadside, and the Duke "with a cursorary eye o'erglanced the articles."

The victor of Vittoria may be pardoned for not recognising the value of the pictures that loomed before him through the smoke of battle. It is on

record that in sending them to England he wrote, in a covering letter, that they were "not remarkable." When the pictures reached London an inventory was made, with the intention of restoring them to Spain. This would have been their fate had not Ferdinand VII., in recognition of the services of the Duke of Wellington to himself and his dynasty, presented the pictures to the Duke.

They were cleaned, restored, and framed; the gallery at Apsley House was built to contain them. Thus the pictures which were found hidden in the travelling carriage of King Joseph became the nucleus of the collection at Apsley House.

Among these canvases retrieved from the field of battle were five by Velasquez. One of them I particularly wished to see—the famous "Water-Carrier," which Velasquez painted at Seville when he was nineteen years of age. It is an admirable example of his early, dark manner, and was regarded by his Sevillian contemporaries as a masterpiece. Velasquez was not ill-pleased with this picture. When he made his first journey to Madrid to seek his fortune, he carried it with him as a specimen of his powers. It is a "kitchen piece," or *bodegone*, as these transcripts of homely life were

called. They were popular in Spain and Holland; but the Spaniards were more ruthless in their choice of subjects, rarely including the beautiful decorative objects that the Dutchman loved to paint. "Christ in the House of Martha," at the National Gallery, dates from the same period as "The Water-Carrier."

These *bodegones* are almost monochromes, astonishingly competent, but hardly hinting the magic of technical expression that Velasquez attained towards the end of his life, when he painted those flower-like faces of children in the gallery at Vienna, and the pearly tones of "The Maids of Honour."

I visited the gallery of Apsley House on a June afternoon, when London lay flooded in sunshine. It is not an auspicious occasion to examine pictures when Nature calls, but that brilliant, lighted hour would favour, I thought, the dark, early works of Velasquez. The gallery, which is situated on the first floor of the west wing of Apsley House, commanding a panoramic view of the Row, contains many Italian and Dutch pictures; but I was on the trail of Velasquez, so passed them over until my eyes rested upon "The Water-Carrier," one of many works on the

wall facing the tall windows which overlook the Park. To one who had seen all the work of Velasquez—the shimmering reds, rivulets of gay colour in the dress of the "Infanta in Red," the sunlight and shadow of "The Tapestry Weavers," the subtle modelling of the head of the sculptor "Montañes," the pomp and splendour of "Pope Innocent X." at Rome—it was almost a shock to find myself face to face with this dark and dim work. It is a simple subject, just a street scene in a city where time is of no account, a subject that often presented itself to the vigilant eyes of Velasquez on his walks through Seville. A leathery-faced, stout water-vendor hands a glass of brimming water to a boy. The light falls upon the boy's face, upon the glass of clear water he clutches, upon the vast earthen jar, and upon the linen sleeve that the torn doublet of the water-vendor reveals. In the background the face of another boy, with a mug to his lips, looms out from the varnish that spreads veil-like over the canvas.

It is not a picture that would invite the attention of a casual visitor to Apsley House, and I can well understand that, when it was unrolled upon the battlefield of Vittoria, the criticism of the great Duke would be temperate and laconic. Still it is a

picture that, like all the works of Velasquez, gradually insinuates itself into favour. So confidential did it become that, at the end of a quarter of an hour, I could almost assert that, although the neighbouring Italian pictures, originals as well as copies, were illusions, this leathery-faced, stout water-vendor giving a brimming glass of water to a boy was reality.

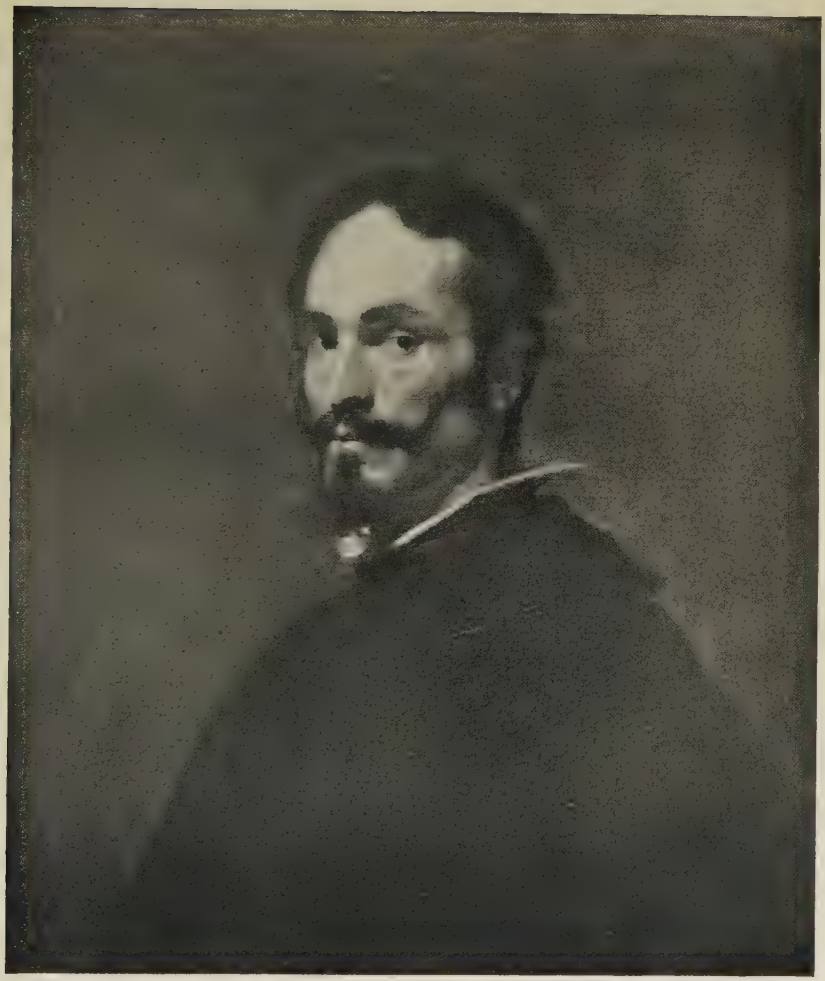
I know why "The Water-Carrier" attracted me. The values are correct. The relative importance of the light and shade of the tones had been appreciated. Velasquez's clear eyes, which in the future were to win their way to an unerring appreciation of values, were already, at the age of nineteen, seeing his subject as a harmonious whole. He did not choose to paint the bright Sevillian sunlight beyond the shady corner where the jar stands, with the lines from the potter's wheel still indented upon it; for, before Claude set the sun in the sky, and Turner flooded the world with its vibrating beams, artists—extraordinary that it should have been so—were unwilling or afraid to paint the source of light.

Adjacent to "The Water-Carrier" is another *bodegone*—two dark-haired boys seated at a table. One drinks, and the other watches him; upon the

table are jars and plates. It is a harmony in russets or red grays, leading from the dark surface of the table to the lighter brown of the elder boy's jacket, accentuated by the livelier note of an orange standing in the mouth of one of the jars. Dark and hard: yes; and the technique is still in the progressive stage: but pleasing to the eye, on account of the harmony of tone and the strength of the drawing. This was one of the pictures that Raphael Mengs admired in 1858 for the essential difference between the lights and shades. Above it, in the gallery at Apsley House, hangs a screaming creation by Raphael Mengs himself. It is amazing that a man who could see and admire the essential difference between lights and shades in a picture by Velasquez did not suggest the essential difference between lights and shades in his own work.

As my hour was wearing away, and the visit of a stranger to Apsley House must necessarily be brief, I turned regretfully from the *bodegones*, and scanned the end wall, which is shaded from the afternoon sun.

There repose two masterpieces of Velasquez, also spoils from the battlefield of Vittoria. Had the great Duke examined these carefully, he could



hardly have written the letter saying that the assortment of canvases found in the travelling carriage were "not remarkable."

One is that subtle and brilliant sketch for the great red portrait of Pope Innocent X. in the Doria-Pamfili Palace in Rome, painted during his second visit to Italy. Sixteen replicas and sketches of the portrait of Innocent X. have been catalogued; but the authorities agree that the half-length at Apsley House is the authentic rapid study on which the larger portrait is based.

I see still, emerging from the dark background, the dull red complexion and the crafty face crowned by the bright red biretta. The red of the cope is fainter and dappled with streaks of light; the plain surface of the collar contrasts with the puckered mouth and the gleam in the furtive blue eyes, watchful, and a little amused.

The other portrait is that grave, pale, unknown Spanish gentleman, one of the most fascinating of all the Master's portraits; and I could wish that scientific criticism still allowed this to be a likeness of Velasquez himself—an attribution that was once willingly accepted. You can almost believe that

this pale aristocrat is alive, so finely are face and bust modelled upon the dark background. Observe the head closely, and try to discover how the effect is gained. There is a twirling impasto of paint upon the forehead, as if the brush loaded with pigment had been caught in an eddy. Thence it sweeps in a streak of light down the nose, and finishes with a splash beneath the beard. This explains nothing. Painters try to discover how he worked; they air theories, and end in disagreement.

The way of Velasquez was the simple way of knowledge and mastery. He looked, and in looking searched; took his brush, and, knowing just what masses and accents were needed to get his effects, painted.

If I were asked to rearrange the gallery at Apsley House, which is unlikely, I would take the four Velasquez pictures, two representing his youth and two his maturity, and, having removed the assortment of works from that pleasant end wall which is shaded from the afternoon sun, I would hang the two water-drinking pictures, the Pope, and the pale Unknown, upon the line on that quiet wall, with nothing below them and nothing above them—just those four pictures, which are so

splendid, and which the great Duke thought were "not remarkable."

But a man who had just whipped Napoleon may be forgiven a temporary blunting of the æsthetic perceptions.

CHAPTER V

AT HERTFORD HOUSE

When the Wallace Collection was opened to the public in 1890 the word went round those studios, where art was a subject of vital interest, that the treasures of Hertford House contained a wonderful portrait of a Spanish lady by Velasquez. Those who had seen his "Lady in the Mantilla" in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire argued that the brilliant sketch was a study, impulsive and accomplished, for the more mature and concentrated portrait of "The Lady with a Fan" at Hertford House.

The Wallace Collection in Manchester Square became a place of pilgrimage for those painters of the new movement who were developing under the influence of Velasquez. Again he was speaking from the grave, again showing the modern world ever new, ever old beauties in drawing, modelling, right values, and reticent colour; again he was proclaim-

ing the effects that he obtained with half-tones, so faint as to be hardly discernible, so cloistral, yet so telling in the grave melody of his scheme; again he was revealing truths that our dense eyes could not perceive in Nature, but which became self-evident when stated by him.

All who saw this portrait were enthusiastic about the drawing and painting of the gloved hand holding the fan; of the blacks in the mantilla, those Velasquez blacks that ripple and glisten like a shadowed stream flowing under overhanging boughs; of the dignity and distinction that informs the portrait.

There is a passage in *The Stones of Venice* wherein Ruskin explains that the finer an eye for colour a painter has, the less does he require to gratify it intensely; that less, however, must be supremely good, as the finest notes of a great singer, which are so near to silence. Ruskin describes how the master-painter is sternly temperate; how for a time he allows himself nothing but sober browns and dull grays; and how cautiously, as the crown of his work and the consummation of its music, "he permits the momentary crimson and azure, and the whole canvas is in a flame."

That passage was simmering in my head when I first saw "The Lady with a Fan"—a dark, grave, and most natural portrait, the very presentment of a Madrileña, clothed, as the visitor to Madrid still sees her, in black, the favourite colour, admirable background to the slumbering temperament that will flash forth, like blade from scabbard, when the emotions are roused. This "Lady with a Fan" is Spain. I recalled Thoré's arresting phrase: "There is no other painting that better represents Spain and Velasquez."

As I looked there gradually emanated from this funereal lady the colour that Velasquez had permitted himself. Why had I not noticed before the shimmer of the white gloves shot with blue, the warmth of the bosom, the glow on the face; or the crimson lines of the full lips, the faint flush on the cheeks, and the blue bow attached to the coiled rosary? Suddenly from beneath the bow flashed the momentary crimson, just a touch of the pigment-laden brush, "and the whole canvas was in a flame."

Her name is unknown; but the pedigree of the portrait is fully recorded by Professor Justi. Sold at the Lucien Bonaparte dispersion for the sum of £31, "The Lady with a Fan" passed to

the Aguado Gallery, and was purchased by Lord Hertford in 1843 for £50. She is now beyond price.

Outside the circle of the royal house of Spain, there are extant only three portraits of Spanish women from the brush of Velasquez. Their names are unknown.

The first is "The Lady with a Fan." The second at Madrid, bearing the title of "The Sibyl," is supposed by some to be a portrait of the artist's wife, Juana, daughter of his master, Pacheco. She is described in the St. Ildefonso inventory of 1774 as a woman in profile holding a tablet. Doubtless Velasquez thought her charming; or did he marry her because she was his master's daughter, because she favoured this tall dark youth, of whom her father was so proud, and because to marry her was less troublesome than to refrain? For Velasquez was somewhat lethargic by nature, and as regards his material may be said to have followed the line of least resistance. This heavy-faced girl, with the blunt nose and the thick chin, is not pretty; but she is alive. Her glory is her hair, black, thick, and abundant, falling to her shoulders. One might describe her as a schoolgirl with a portfolio balanced upon her knee,

sitting very still, a girl in a day-dream, gazing into the future.

The third portrait is that middle-aged, richly-clad lady in the Berlin Museum, to whom also tradition gives the title of "Juana de Miranda," wife of Velasquez. Here she is a dame of forty or thereabouts, whose ample figure has long lost the slim lines of girlhood. The right hand rests upon the back of a red chair ; the other, falling by her side, clutches a small fan.

What implicit trust one places in Velasquez! We are confident that he will never pose, never attempt to startle us into short-lived admiration by theatrical effects. He paints his subjects as they are ; he never cajoles them into what folk call artistic poses. With his command over the technicalities of his art, what monkey tricks he could have played had he been so minded! His method changes ; but it is always inspired by the character of the sitter before him—now heavy with impasto, now a mere glaze of paint, now in touches as if set on the canvas with the flick of a whip. He is content to let his sitters be doing nothing more exciting than holding a paper, a hat, a glove, a fan. It has been argued that this full-blown lady at Berlin is too

richly clad to be the wife of Velasquez,—that her farthingale is too sumptuous, that her rings are too many, that her hair is too lavishly attired. The purse of Velasquez may have been slender; but it is not unnatural to assume that his generosity to those he loved was abundant.

In the catalogue of the Wallace Collection eight pictures bear the name of Velasquez; but some are frankly copies, and others have "Ascribed to Velasquez," damning phrase, appended. Thus the number is reduced from eight to three. Of these the "Don Balthasar in Infancy" might have attracted me more had I not seen the child portrait at Vienna. This "Don Balthasar in Infancy" is a striking object-lesson in the difference between the work of a master and that of a lesser man. The clear, round face of the child, the fair, curly hair, the gold-embroidered frock, the nervous grip of the fingers upon the staff, are indubitably from the brush of Velasquez. The mechanical painting of the curtain, tassel, and cushion, are certainly by a pupil, probably the irrepressible Mazo.

Two pictures by Velasquez remain. These are of surpassing and outstanding interest. One is "The Lady with the Fan," and the other is "Don Balthasar Carlos in the Riding-School."

As with the Madrileña in the gray-blue gloves, so with the Prince riding his pony into the school: I find it difficult to exercise restraint over adjectives. That is the irony of days at the writing-table with Velasquez: he, the most objective and self-contained of men, is perpetually inviting and urging the commentator to extravagance of epithet.

This riding-school picture, or sketch, has those attributes which always make a picture beloved by the trained connoisseur—breadth, and great spaces decorated by tone. Lesser men employ figures or ornament to fill a space. Velasquez makes it lovely with tone, the light of day animating an inanimate surface. I close my eyes and visualize that great, flat, yellowy-gray wall of the Madrid riding-school, with the dark horizontal mass of the roof, and the tower rising against the sky; yet these darks are not dark. The light sweeps in a great triangle over the ground and disappears to the left, skirting the mass of shadow upon which the black pony caracoles. Every one of the shadowy figures — and shadowy and indistinct Velasquez intentionally made them, so that they should not distract the eye from little Prince Balthasar, the focus-point—every one of those figures, in pose and gesture, is awaiting the supreme

moment, the entrance of the King's son and heir into the riding-school. You can almost feel the dramatic tension. He comes. What a superbly-placed figure it is! What an exhibition of draughtsmanship! Mark the intensity of the Prince's grip upon his mount, the way his figure tells against the bare wall, and the white-plumed feather against the dark roof. The riding-master stands at the entrance preparing to receive the staff from the hands of a dwarf. The boy rides forward. The life of Spain is centred in this small space, and the figure peering over the wall into the open country heightens, by contrast with the panorama beyond, the centralization of the world of Spain within a riding-school.

That pony stallion, with the white nose and intelligent eye, is worthy of his rider, who, after his father, was considered to be the best horseman in Spain. The reputation of Velasquez might stand by his painting of animals. He was not at his best when drawing a steed in motion, for the horse that will pose in the act of galloping has not yet been born; but he was supreme in painting the head of a horse or a resting dog. I am grateful to the Madrid photographers for reproducing only a detail of the large equestrian portrait

of Queen Isabella of Spain — the head and shoulders of the white horse. Velasquez is obviously not responsible for the inept painting of the Queen's flowered riding-cloak and the trappings that dominate half the picture; but the painting—dashing yet subtle—of the steed's head and neck is certainly his. In the large photograph of Queen Isabella's white horse that lies before me, the mere bridle, and the long lock of hair that tosses downwards over the animal's nose, evoke delight.

It is interesting to compare the impulsive sketch of "Don Balthasar in the Riding-School" in the Wallace Collection with the more finished version at Grosvenor House. I could fill pages with the arguments that have been printed for and against the authenticity of those two pictures. Apart from certain of his masterpieces, such as "The Maids of Honour," "The Surrender of Breda," "The Tapestry Weavers," the equestrian portrait of "Prince Balthasar," the "Venus with the Mirror," "The Lady with a Fan," and the portrait of Martinez Montañes, there is no finality of judgment among critics as to the extent of Mazo's meddling with the canvases of Velasquez. Sir Walter Armstrong is of opinion that both these

riding-school pictures are copies of an original that was burnt at Madrid in the fire of 1734. None can gainsay him. Each must form his own judgment.

Personally, I do not ask for a finer example of the essential Velasquez, the essential but not the fully-developed Velasquez, working within the limits of his subject, than this sketch of "Don Balthasar in the Riding-School" at Hertford House, with its great spaces of exquisite tone.

The two versions hung within a few feet of each other at the "Old Masters" Exhibition at Burlington House in 1890. Horse and rider are identical in size and form; but in the Grosvenor House version the design has been carried much farther. The gross figure of Olivares, early friend and patron of Velasquez, to whom Velasquez was faithful after his disgrace, stands at the entrance to the school, receiving a lance from the attendant, which he will hand to the Prince; the architectural appurtenances of the school have been extended; and upon the balcony stand the King and the Queen, awaiting the arrival of the Prince.

In my opinion the corporeal forms of the Grosvenor House picture are not to be compared with the illusive and impulsive charm of the figures

in the sketch. They draw the eye away from the central motive, and, with the pagoda erection at the entrance to the school, worry the dignity of that bare wall.

Prince Balthasar was his father's idol, and from his second until his sixteenth year, when he died, Valasquez painted him as often as he painted Philip IV. The Prince, like his father, like Velasquez, delighted in horses and dogs. Philip IV.'s letters to his brother Ferdinand contain many references to the boy's riding prowess. On one occasion Ferdinand sent to his nephew a pony stallion, described as a "little devil," which may be the brown pony the Prince rides in the equestrian portrait at Madrid, or perhaps the black stallion upon which he caracoles in the Wallace Collection picture. The instructions accompanying the gift were that the pony, "before being mounted, was to be carefully bridled, and to receive half a dozen lashes, after which he would go like a little dog."

Philip IV. stands upon the balcony of the riding-school in the Grosvenor House picture, watching his son careering into the yard. Mercifully the future is concealed from him. Little did he think that this boy, heir to two worlds, was to die; that his wife, standing by his side, was to die; and

that—strange destiny!—he was himself to marry the girl who was about to be affianced to his son.

The shadowy figure in the Wallace Collection version who stands at the entrance to the riding-school to receive the Prince is not unlike the figure seated at the table in "The Betrothal," thought by Lord Savile to be Velasquez himself. Perhaps Velasquez intended this figure to be a portrait of himself; perhaps it gratified him to be seen standing in a welcoming attitude between two persons he loved—the King and the Prince—with the air and odour of horses that all loved about them.

Again I visualize this alluring picture with that eloquent bare wall, and the long, dim roof and tower around which the sky hovers, floating down the side of the building, and mingling with the faint blue of the rolling plains that spread upwards to the distant sierras. All is beautifully in value. These simple spaces of tone evoke the pleasure that the nocturnes and delicate seascapes of Whistler give —that master of values who owed so much to his great forerunner.

I like to imagine the landscapes that Velasquez would have painted had he lived in these days—

atmospheric impressions of sea and sky just blown upon the canvas. I imagine him painting such a scene as Burns evoked in another medium in two magical lines:

> "The white moon is setting behind the white wave,
> And Time is setting with me, O!"

CHAPTER VI

IN YORKSHIRE

By the chances of war, Velasquez, about one hundred and fifty years after his death, became associated with the Duke of Wellington. By the changes of peace, Diego Rodriguez de Silva y Velasquez is connected with the county of Yorkshire, and indirectly with Scott, Dickens, and Turner.

Velasquez probably never heard of Yorkshire; nor of Scott's *Rokeby;* nor of Rokeby Hall, whither those who were ill content until they had inspected every existing picture from Velasquez's brush had to travel, until quite recently, to see his superb "Venus with the Mirror."

A few elderly connoisseurs may remember the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition of 1857, of which Ruskin wrote that the most impressive things were the works of Reynolds and Velasquez; that nothing told upon the eye so much; that no

other pictures retained it with such a persistent power.

Although Velasquez's "Venus with the Mirror" was included in the Manchester collection, I doubt if the public were vividly impressed by this supple-limbed, graceful Andalusian dancer, showing only her comely back. Manchester in 1857, being Manchester in 1857, hung her high at a discreet distance from the line of vision, as if she were an improper person, dangerous to Manchester's morals. In 1890 this lonely and beautiful "Venus" was invited to the Old Masters Exhibition at Burlington House, where she was received with acclamation, and hung in the place of honour. Having missed seeing her at Burlington House in 1890, I obtained permission from Mr. H. E. Morritt to visit her at Rokeby Hall, shortly before her removal to London in the summer of 1905.

It was the kind of expedition in which one delights—a fast journey of two hundred and fifty miles into an historic county to see one picture, not a collection, and that picture a masterpiece.

Of course, I knew this "Venus" from photographs, so eloquently silent contrasted with modern clamouring nudes. You see the back only of her long, lithe body, lissome as a hazel wand, stretched

with Andalusian indolence upon a couch that extends across the picture. Her shapely, neatly-attired head rests upon her hand, and she gazes nonchalantly at the reflection of her face in the mirror. The pretty reposeful face is somewhat blurred, for Velasquez was not the man to distract the beholder with two focuses. He was engrossed with the loveliness of flesh in light, the rhythm and modelling of the figure, and the transparent shadows that lurk where the lower curves of back and leg slide into the black drapery upon which she reclines, glimmering with reflected lights. A kneeling Cupid supports the ebony-framed mirror, and behind is a heavy red curtain.

This is precisely the kind of nude that we might have expected from the grave and reticent Velasquez, who delighted in that most difficult but most tempting of all the many enterprises that invite the artist—the play of flesh in light, and the anatomical indications of the well-formed body. It was painted after his second visit to Italy; he was at the height of his power; his technique had advanced from science to inspiration; he achieved his object with broad, bold sweeps of the brush, without a sign of fumbling or a hint of uncertainty. This "Venus" is the supreme painting

of the nude, the fusing of the real and the ideal, a combination which Michael Angelo achieved so superbly in his "Creation of Adam," in the Sistine Chapel.

Here, as in all Velasquez's mature work, we are reminded of his detachment from his material. He intrigues only with the light of day. His trained hand obediently produces what his eye—instinctively rejecting the superfluous—sees in a world ever bathed in its enveloping atmosphere; but he himself, Velasquez, the Spanish gentleman, sprung from an ancient Portuguese family, stands austerely aloof, silent, but very watchful. His motto might have been that saying of Montaigne: "I teach nothing: I relate."

How different is it with Titian! The opulence and the splendour of Venice are husbanded in his amazing vitality, and pass in floods of colour and emotion upon his canvases. Titian's nudes proclaim his passionate love for the roses and raptures of the human form. His "Venus" at Dresden, his "Danae" and "Venus Recreating with Music" at Madrid, to name but three, are rich and luscious as a grape-harvest high noon. They are the surcharge of an opulent temperament that sees the nude form in terms of its own

prodigality. Velasquez's nude is as impersonal as his dogs, horses, and dwarfs, his pretty princesses, idiots, and surly kings.

Had Velasquez been a smaller man, he might have been influenced in the painting of this nude by the glamour and glory of Titian. Titian's "Venus with the Mirror," that he painted for Philip II., was hanging in the royal bedchamber long before Velasquez began his "Venus." So pleased was Titian with his dark-eyed goddess, her small head crowned with a plait of golden hair, her hand resting upon her breast, that he painted many replicas. Pleased, too, was Philip IV. with the heirloom, and it was probably owing to his persuasion that Velasquez set himself to paint a "Venus" as a companion picture to the "Venus" of Titian.

The "Venus with the Mirror" painted by Titian for Philip II. is lost, for there is no doubt that the picture at the Hermitage is a replica.

The "Venus with the Mirror" by Velasquez was purchased by Mr. J. B. S. Morritt, great-uncle of the present owner of Rokeby Hall, an honoured name, familiar to all readers of Sir Walter Scott's *Rokeby*. The guide-books to Teesdale quote in full the long letter from

Morritt to Scott, written on December 28, 1811, in answer to a communication from Sir Walter which contained the following historical passage:

"And now I have a grand project to tell you of. Nothing less than a fourth romance in verse. The theme during the Civil Wars of Charles I., and the scene your own domain of Rokeby. . . . Is there not some book (sense or nonsense I care not) on the beauties of Teesdale? I mean a descriptive work. If you can point it out, or lend it to me, you will do me a great favour, and no less if you can tell me any tradition of the period."

Rokeby, I believe, is not read by the present generation; but Rokeby Park, wherein the Greta and Tees meet, will always be instinct with memories of the author of the poem "laid in your own domain of Rokeby." One man I found, an elderly, hale retainer, who brimmed with the literary associations of Rokeby. He knew every spot where Scott had mused or wandered; he quoted tags of *Rokeby* with a flash in his honest eye and a lilt in his voice; and when I asked him how Velasquez's "Venus with the Mirror" came into the possession of the family he promptly answered: "Mr. Morritt bought it on the recommendation of Sir Walter Scott."

I honoured his loyalty, but doubted his accuracy. Mr. J. B. S. Morritt did buy the Velasquez under the advice of an expert; but the far-seeing counsellor was not Sir Walter, whose mighty gifts did not include a knowledge of painting. I can find no mention of the "Venus" in Lockhart's *Life;* indeed, the only reference to art I remember is the following from Scott's Diary: "Saw in Morritt's possession the original miniature of Milton by Cooper—a valuable thing indeed."

Morritt's expert can hardly have been Sir Joshua Reynolds, as Professor Justi states in his book; for Reynolds died in 1790, and not until 1808 was the "Venus" purchased by Mr. Wallis at the sale of the collection of Godoy, Prince of the Peace, from whose hands it passed into the possession of the Morritt family.

Sir William Stirling Maxwell is probably right in saying, in his *Annals of the Artists of Spain,* that the "Venus" was bought on the advice of Sir Thomas Lawrence by Mr. Morritt, of Rokeby Hall, for £500.

Thither I went on a glorious day in July, 1905, to make acquaintance with her. I slept at Barnard Castle, and there I came into touch with the first of the four great men whose immaterial

presences still animate Teesdale. It was an encounter on the material plane. The ale at the King's Head, where I stayed the night, had been recommended by Newman Noggs. Disciples of Dickens will remember the letter addressed to "My Dear Young Man" that Nicholas Nickleby found in his pocket when he, Mr. Squeers, and the miserable boys arrived at Dotheboys Hall. The postscript ran: "If you should go near Barnard Castle, there is good ale at the King's Head. Say you know me, and I am sure they will not charge you for it. You may say Mr. Noggs there, for I was a gentleman then: I was indeed."

By the smoking-room lamp, surrounded by "doggy" men, who told amazing stories of the doings of Yorkshire tykes, I re-read the fine preface to *Nicholas Nickleby*. The just anger and eloquent common-sense of that preface is as vivid as on the day it was written.

On the morrow I set out on the four-mile walk to Greta Bridge, near the ancient walls of which is the entrance to Rokeby Park. All the way, with the Greta purling in its cool depths far below, the country was reminiscent of Scott, Dickens, and Turner. Beyond the Bowes Museum, perched upon a

hillock by a rolling meadow where the haymakers raked in the fragrant grass, was a sign-post.

"To Rokeby," it said.

Past the ruins of Eglinstone Abbey, crumbling with dignity on a green plateau above the foaming Tees, which divides Durham from Yorkshire, I dawdled towards the old Abbey Bridge, and stopped before another sign-post.

"To Greta Bridge," it said.

Slowly progressing, I found a third sign-post.

"To Brignall," it said; and I caught myself chanting the words of a song from *Rokeby*, that I had not recalled for twenty years:

> "O, Brignall's banks are wild and fair,
> And Greta's woods are green. . . ."

This was the country of Scott, and as I strode through the fair fresh land I could almost persuade myself that I saw the gallant figure of Sir Walter, whose wont it was to travel from Abbotsford by way of Flodden and Hexham, accompanied by his eldest boy and girl on their ponies, with his wife following in the carriage. Thus they journeyed to Rokeby, "one of the most enviable places I have ever seen," says Scott, where lived his old and dear friend.

I entered the gates of Rokeby Hall, secluded, like some old picture on a convent wall, from the rush and dust of modern life. Venerable trees and a gray roadway were my companions, with innumerable rabbits that eyed me from the bosky glades and were unafraid. This fertile silence was a proper prelude for a morning with a masterpiece by Velasquez, resting in one of the rooms of yonder yellow-stone, home-like building, looking quite sprightly in the sunshine.

I passed into the cool low hall. The fragments of ancient statues, and the delicate discoloured drawings upon the walls, dating from the Italian Renaissance, proclaimed that here had dwelt an ardent gatherer of beautiful and rare things, a connoisseur of taste and knowledge.

The servant who conducted me up the broad staircase was disposed to draw my attention to the pictures that we passed on the ascent, but I bade him lead me straight to the Velasquez. It was the "Venus" I had travelled so far to see, and I wished to pay her the compliment of a fresh eye.

We entered the drawing-room (how strange it seemed!—a great Velasquez in a modern drawing-room), and I threw a swift glance round the walls,

hardly daring to discover the "Venus," fearful that I might be disappointed. Suddenly I saw her, and sighed with delight. She exceeded my anticipations: that is the way of Velasquez. Never had he yet come down from his pedestal; never had he shown himself less than a great master.

I begged the servant to retire, and he left me alone with pencil and notebook in the drawing-room of Rokeby Hall. It is a lofty apartment with a painted ceiling, corniced by a series of portraits, uniform in size and manner. The high green walls are almost hidden by pictures of varying merit; and facing the fireplace, a little above the line of the eye, hung the "Venus with the Mirror."

At first glance I was almost inclined to describe the picture as a monochrome, so reticent is the colour, so completely is the eye charmed by the beauty of the flesh painting, the vagaries of light upon the pliant body and upon the drapery beneath. Gradually, however, the colours began to assert themselves, not rivalling or outvieing the light, but acknowledging its supremacy, and working loyally with it. I noted the colour in the lights and shadows of the grayish-purple nether drapery, and the yellowy-white of the nethermost

quilt; the green veil, and the huddle of white diaphanous stuff that drives the mirror away; the pinky ribbons on the ebony frame of the mirror; the blue of the Cupid's sash, the rich red of the curtain behind, and the faint flush on the girl's cheek.

I recalled the objection often made that the blurred reflection in the mirror libels the pretty profile of this Andalusian girl. Professor Justi thinks that "perhaps the damsel did not wish to be recognised." Another authority suggests that this was the only possible way for "the chaste and severe Velasquez" to paint the nude. Possibly; but "the chaste and severe Velasquez" was never disloyal to what his eyes told him. We must remember that at the time this picture was painted the construction of mirrors had not reached the scientific accuracy that we demand to-day, and that the glass may have been concave; also that the eye of the spectator is meant to focus upon the girl's body, not upon the reflection of her pretty features.

Take a seventeenth-century Spanish mirror, pose a head under the conditions of this "Venus," and ask yourself whether the blurred reflection does not coincide with the blurred reflection that the master eye of Velasquez saw and painted.

I left Rokeby Hall, walked through the grounds, lingered at the spot where, according to tradition, Turner made studies for the "Meeting of the Greta and Tees," watched the foaming waters of the two rivers join and flow forward in irritant partnership, and then made my way by the riverside, through wild and lovely woods, to the old Abbey Bridge, where an itinerant purveyor of food gave me bite and sip.

We talked. He knew the country, and he was familiar with the name of Velasquez, which he pronounced with the Durham intonation and accent.

This Durham man discoursed enthusiastically of the splendour of the Bowes Museum, which, at a cost of a hundred thousand pounds, was built by Mrs. Bowes (Josephine Benoite, Countess of Montalbo) to contain the pictures and pottery collected by her husband, and bequeathed "to the inhabitants of Barnard Castle and to the world."

As he was a Durham man, I was amused, but not surprised, to hear this remark drop from his lips: "I've heard a lot of people say that they've never seen such fine pictures in London as them at the Bowes Museum."

I reserved my opinion; but when he proceeded to remark that there was a splendid picture by

Velasquez at the Bowes Museum, I hastily finished my luncheon, and strode towards the hill upon which the Bowes Museum stands.

It is a magnificent building, still unfinished. The collection of pottery is first-rate ; the pictures are not first-rate. Withdraw a dozen fine pictures from the Dulwich Gallery, and there is little to choose between the mediocre level of the collection at Dulwich and the level of the collection at the Bowes Museum.

I searched for the Velasquez, scanned every picture, unwilling to confess that I was unable to distinguish at a glance the Spaniard's handling—in vain. Not one of the pictures in the Bowes Museum seemed to me to bear the slightest resemblance to a Velasquez.

I returned to the quest, this time glancing at the lower bar of the frames, where the names of the painters are inscribed, and lo! under a huge "Christ's Agony in the Garden," No. 190, I saw in large letters the magic name Velasquez.

Impossible! Quite impossible! I imagined the flush of anger mantling the face of Velasquez at the mere idea of such an ascription. This "Christ's Agony in the Garden" was much more likely to be a Carlo Dolci than a Velasquez.

I purchased a catalogue, and turned to No. 190.

"Assigned by Mr. Bowes to Velasquez," said the catalogue.

I smiled, returned to Barnard Castle, and ordered a glass of the ale recommended by Newman Noggs.

CHAPTER VII

A DIGRESSION ON THE SUN

Granted the incentive, I question whether there was much in the way of painting that Velasquez could not have accomplished; but it would seem that he needed the spur of encouragement to make him exploit his powers. His modesty, or a strain of inherent lethargy, may account for his quiet contentment with the subjects that he painted, almost always those that happened to come under his eyes. Had it not been for the example of Rubens, who spent some months in Madrid in the years 1628-1629, Velasquez's development would have been slower, his essays in painting still more circumscribed.

He is so consummate a craftsman that one wonders what would have been the effect upon his imagination had he been born later, and seen the works of Turner—the father of the modern passion for sunlight in landscape. Would he have

become a master in *la peinture claire?* Being Velasquez, he would not have founded his style in the slightest degree upon Turner. It was not the way of Velasquez to play the sedulous ape to anybody; but even as Tintoretto and Titian opened a new window of his vision, revealing to him the majesty of design and the pomp of colour, might Turner have directed him to the absorbing study of sunlight.

Velasquez did paint the sunlight; but that was incidental. The sun shines royally in the brilliant passage between the figures of Spinola and the Dutch commander in "The Surrender of Breda," where the triumphant Spanish soldiers, in their butterfly garments, swing past in a haze of heat. It dazzles in "The Tapestry Weavers," falling in a wide beam from a hidden window diagonally across the hanging tapestry. It brightens the workroom, and illumines the head, arm, and shoulder of the girl in the foreground. But sunlight never absorbed and captivated Velasquez as it absorbed and captivated Turner. Philip IV. was his sun.

Reflecting upon Velasquez's small commerce with sunlight, and how, since Turner's day, the sun has hypnotized our landscape painters, I was

moved to revisit the basement of the National Gallery, where are displayed some of the numerous drawings upon the surfaces of which Turner, with an economy of means that is the despair of his descendants, imprisoned the sunshine.

There I encountered a friend, a serious painter, young and enthusiastic, who has still to find himself. We perambulated the basement rooms, and wondered for the hundredth time at the prodigality of Turner. Then, my mind being full of Velasquez, I led my friend off to the rooms beneath the west wing, where hang small copies of the great pictures by Velasquez in the Prado Museum.

Having looked at the passages of sunlight in "The Surrender of Breda" and "The Tapestry Weavers," we lunched, and then strolled into the Green Park, discussing what Mr. George Moore calls "the French heresy of clear painting." It was easy and natural to talk of sunlight and movement in art on that brilliant day of early summer.

To be accurate: I talked. My companion was one of those admirable and sympathetic natures who tacitly encourage the copious talker. He is, as I have explained, a painter, inarticulate outside his art, a solitary, inconspicuous man, with a

passionate regard for Millet, and, like him, a reader of the Psalms and Virgil.

Our conversation is here reported. If my part in it seems superabundant, I can only plead that he was apparently a willing listener, and full of subtle encouragement.

The afternoon was so brilliant, the air so buoyant, the sun-dappled grass beneath the trees so paintable, the memory of Turner's water-colours so vivid, that before I was well aware of it I found myself embarked on a sea of words. I was breathlessly drawing nigh to the end of an appreciation of Claude Monet, when my companion laid his hand gently upon my arm, and said:

"But when last we met you were all for Velasquez. There was nobody else in the world. Why this sudden enthusiasm for sunlight and movement?"

"Velasquez remains," I retorted. "He is a sun. But there are other stars, differing in glory. A man may revere Milton and also stammer with excitement when a madrigal lilts in his head. Why shouldn't a Velasquez student love a lyric? Let us talk about lyrical painters. Do you know anything of Jacques Marie, the French landscape man? Jacques Marie has

'arrived.' I was walking down Bond Street the other day when I caught sight of a landscape by him in the window of one of those delightful little picture-galleries where there is always something taking. I looked, and the old thrill ran through me. It's always ready when sheer beauty, in faces, in sunsets, in pictures, comes along. And there was sheer beauty in the Jacques Marie pastoral of the village of Montigny on the Loing: moon in evening sky, church, quiet conventual buildings, river, green uplands — everything touched, just touched, with light, all pearly pink. The thing just shimmered in the shop-window. I tell you I quickened at the sudden beauty of it. Cazin couldn't have had a quicker effect upon me. That palely-glowing landscape set me thinking how new a thing in the world are pictures with the real light of day in them and the real sun shining. For hundreds of years, till Claude set the sun more or less in the sky, hardly a painter seems to have realized that light is the most beautiful thing in Nature."

"Were not Rubens and Nicolas Poussin earlier than Claude?" interposed my companion.

"Poussin!" I cried—"Poussin! When I was last in Paris I stood doggedly before every one

of the forty Nicolas Poussins in the Louvre, and I emerged from the ordeal feeling that Nature had gone into mourning. What an inexplicable passion he had for the brown tree in the foreground, and masses of bituminous foliage! The windows in Poussin's landscapes are all shut and curtained. It was raining when I left the Louvre, early evening, with just a glimmer of the spring sun in the sky; yet the light of Paris under those conditions was dazzling compared with the light of Poussin's brightest picture. Nicolas Poussin once wrote from Venice to say that he must flee from that city, as he feared the fascination of her colour. I do believe many of the old painters were really frightened of daylight and sunlight.

"Landscape for centuries was considered a sort of love-child or poor relation, fit only to form a background for figures. O those figures of the Poussins, Claude, and Salvator Rosa! Why, they were often painted by somebody else! Fancy Clausen asking John Bacon to paint in his figures for him! Yet the art authorities of the present day seem to think it's the right thing. In the last edition of the National Gallery catalogue, the compiler states that the value of many pictures by Ruysdael and Hobbema is enhanced by the

presence of figures by Adrian van de Velde. Enhanced! Figures are warp and woof of a landscape as much as trees. Corot knew that when he painted 'Macbeth and the Witches,' now in the Wallace Collection. Those figures are as surely an integral part of the picture as the campanile of the Westminster Roman Catholic Cathedral is part of the main building. Corot's pictorial vision saw them, as he saw the pearly, orange-flecked sky and the light filtering through the trees. I watched Alfred East the other day painting what our good ancestors would have called a landscape with figures. The picture, a harvest scene, was well forward, when his hand suddenly dropped from the sky to the foreground, and the brushes left three great splashes of paint there—one purple, one blue, and one a dull yellow. They balanced the colour-harmony of the picture. They were glowing notes just in the right place. His colour instinct had set them there without premeditation; but I wondered how those arbitrary splashes of colour could be made to have any significance in the design of the picture. A few minutes later his hand again dropped to them. With a few twirls of the brush the masses of purple and blue became dancing figures in gala

costume, and the yellow splash a laden hay-waggon. That's the way to paint a landscape with figures."

"In your search for sunlight and movement through the galleries of London and the Continent," asked my companion, "did you find much before, say, 1600?"

"Movement of a kind—yes. Sunlight—hardly ever. The full glow and glare of the sun, sparkling, glittering, flooding everything with a shimmer of haze, such as you see in the works of Monet and a few of our English 'sun-seekers'—never. The Dutchmen, those astonishing people, flooded their interiors with the light of day, and sent the sun-rays in shafts of light down the walls of courtyards, as in that lovely De Hooch in the Wallace Collection, 'Interior with Woman and Boy.' Her skirt—what a glorious red! The light on the courtyard wall—how luminous! But the Dutchmen, for the most part, painted the pale sunshine of Holland, not the sun colour of the South. How could they?"

"But before 1600?"

"What a man you are for dates! Well, Velasquez, born in 1599, just comes within your limit. Yes: he painted the sunshine in those two great

pictures at Madrid; but he was no sun-seeker. He painted the sun because it was there, and splendidly he did it. "The Tapestry Weavers" is so flayed and cracked that one can hardly judge; but even in its present condition you can see how his masterly eye tracked the sun flooding that room in the old tapestry factory. There is air and light in his quiet blue and green landscapes, and in many of his backgrounds—the equestrian Don Balthasar for example—but no sunshine. Titian and his fellow-Venetians, of course, saw the sun, but as an accessory to the figure. There are few lovelier things in painting than the blue backgrounds of Titian. And do you remember that open window in Lotto's 'Giuliano' portrait at the National Gallery? With Titian, however, sunshine meant the glow of reflected light rather than the direct beams. I've seen figures in shaded Venetian doorways, just bathed in the Titian glamour. Giovanni Bellini, too, had his moments—the trees, and the light behind them, in the 'Death of St. Peter Martyr,' in the National Gallery."

"How about Rubens and Rembrandt?"

"I've tried to like Rubens' big 'Rainbow' landscape at the Wallace Collection; it has a sultry glow, and time has given the colour the all-over

richness that time alone can give; but there's no light in the picture, not even in the rainbow. There's a landscape by him in the National Gallery, with a great hanging painty sun and windows flushed with light, and of course I realize the bigness and the power of his 'Château de Stein,' and the 'Spring,' 'Summer,' and 'Winter' in the series. They may be great art; but they're not the light of day. Rembrandt has sealed his golden brown all over his 'Ideal Landscape' in the Wallace Collection; but the air isn't airy, and birds would drop dead in that atmosphere. There was a Haarlem painter called Wynants, who saw the loveliness of light and announced it, as Ruysdael felt the dignity of Nature's gloom. Go to the National Gallery and enjoy him, and while you are there rest and be thankful for Hobbema's 'Showery Weather' and 'Avenue'; Koninck's 'View in Holland,' and some of the landscapes of Adrian and William van de Velde. And when you go to the Wallace Collection don't forget Cuyp's sunlight and shadows falling across the road and illuminating the distant water in his 'Landscape with an Avenue,' also Jan Hackaert's 'Avenue in a Wood,' with the pattern of the sunlight on the ground and the timid

flecks of it on the trees. Oh yes! it was the Dutchman who first began to walk about in the open air, to use his eyes, and to be unafraid of what he saw."

"But you have travelled rather beyond the year 1600. Did you not find anybody else before that date?"

"Have I spoken about Adam Elsheimer and Joachim Patinir? Patinir was born long, long ago — something before 1500. He was truly a pioneer of the light of day. I love little Patinir. He has a way of starting out from a crowd with a smile. He opens a window in dark galleries, and you see the day. Once, when wandering through the basement rooms of the Prado Museum at Madrid, I suddenly came upon seven Patinirs. It was a jolly meeting. The little man was quite new to me. I knew him only by the reference in Albert Dürer's diary to 'Joachim, the good landscape painter'; but with those landscapes at the Prado he started out as a milestone along the dim road of the past, announcing to a sooty world that trunks of trees are not always brown, and that foliage is sometimes green. This old Fleming greeted me again the other day at the National Gallery with his aerial, silvery-blue 'Landscape—River Scene.' Yes: little Patinir was friendly

with the daylight. Not with the sunshine as Cuyp and Claude saw it, not with the glory of the sun-colour that Turner saw (you know your Ruskin), but with the daylight."

"If Claude first set the sun in the sky, Turner set it blazing and glowing and scintillating and sparkling over his beloved romantic earth. As the sun fertilizes and colours life, so Turner fertilized and coloured the great whirling movement of modern experimental art. O yes: I know all about Constable and his triumph at the Salon of 1824 with his 'Hay-wain.' He revealed to the French Romantics—what had been hidden from Rubens and Rembrandt in landscape, from Claude and the Poussins—that the rain wets and the wind blows, that Nature is more squirrel than slug. Corot, Troyon, Rousseau, Millet, Michel, Daubigny, Dupré—all those great men, who saw Nature largely, drank from the Constable river. You will see the birth of Corot's feathery trees in his 'Leaping Horse,' in the Diploma Gallery; but Turner has outstripped Constable in influence and inspiration. He's the father of Impressionism, of sunlight and movement. All the loveliness of modern landscape, shimmering light and iridescent colour, dates from him. His successors—the poin-

tillists, the dividers of tones, and so on — work scientifically. Turner reached the goal by instinct. Look at his 'Approach to Venice,' his 'Rain, Steam, and Speed' — a dozen of them in the National Gallery—and wonder! Recall his slight water-colours, pulsating with sunshine and movement—his 'Running Wave on a Cross-tide,' his 'Breaking Wave on a Beach,' his 'Sunshine on Sea,' and his colour dreams of Venice and Lucerne. The modern desire to express the loveliness of the world is all in Turner, and the latest French criticism is proud to call him master. Read M. le Sizeranne! 'All the torches from 1825 to 1870,' he says, 'that have shed a new light upon art have in turn been lit at Turner's flame.'"

I paused a moment to regain my breath. My companion made a remark, not quite intelligible; but the name of Ruskin was audible, for he dwelt on it lingeringly. I brought the ferrule of my stick heavily to the ground.

"Of course, Ruskin was right about Turner—tremendously right, as he nearly always was. He had the defects of his qualities: sometimes he overstated his case, like certain modern painters of sunlight. Nobody who has seen the Salons of the past ten years, and the weird exhibitions of the

'Independents' in Paris, doubts that. I have no use for extravagancies: brilliant purple shadows that leap out at you from the picture, and the vivid, valueless, highly-keyed sunshine picture that makes you blink. I prefer the sober sunshine of those new galleries in the Louvre where the Thomy Thiéry Collection is housed: such a picture as Corot's 'Dale,' so simple yet so profound, with its carpet of broad spaces of shine and shadow, or Troyon's majestic 'Early Morning: Going forth to Plough.' How splendidly he focussed the whole scene!—the mass of noble beasts against the ample sky in the very nip of morning. It's a cold sun; but it penetrates the picture. And that runaway cow of Dupré's—do you remember it? Isn't the movement of the boy and of the beast stunning?"

My companion mentioned the name of Degas.

"He's one of the masters of movement. The flying tulle and the twinkling feet of his ballet girls—why, it's final! How Ruskin would have hated the narrow room of Degas's imagination! But there's place for all in the caravansery of art: for the fugitive grace of the skirts of Degas's ballet girls, as for the opulence of Titian and the majestic reticence of Velasquez."

"We will now take a cab to the Diploma Gallery, and look at John Phillip's copy of the central portion of Velasquez's 'Maids of Honour.' It is good to come back to Velasquez. He is the great restorative. I appreciate the sunlight school; but it is to Velasquez that one goes for healing. Through him comes a stirring of all the deeper emotions, the strength that Antæus drew from the earth."

CHAPTER VIII

IN DULWICH

VELASQUEZ would not have been tempted to paint sunshine had he travelled to Dulwich on the miserable Saturday before an August Bank Holiday when I made the journey to London's leafy suburb. There was no sun; it rained; it blew; it sleeted. Every train was late, and all London, wet and draggled, seemed travelling from Victoria. I reflected that I was probably the only unit of those thousands going to the most pleasantly situated picture-gallery in England to see a fine Velasquez.

The building stands in a flower-garden, abutting upon a shady tree-planted road, an honest one-storied erection covered from base to roof with a trailing creeper. It contains the most richly-coloured portrait of Philip IV. that Velasquez ever painted. In Palomino's time this rose-pink three-quarter length was in Madrid. Thence it passed to

Paris in the middle of the eighteenth century, and finally into the possession of Noel Joseph Desenfans, art critic, dealer, poet, novelist, one of the benefactors who bequeathed collections of pictures to the gallery of Alleyn's College of God's Gift at Dulwich. His bones rest in the mausoleum attached to the picture-gallery.

The "Philip IV." at the Dulwich Gallery is the well-known Fraga portrait, so-called because it was painted at the Spanish town of that name. Probably when, in 1640, Philip set out from Madrid for the seat of war he really persuaded himself that he was about valiantly to subdue the revolt in Catalonia, and drive the French back into their own territory, with colours flying and himself at the head of his army. Philip IV., being Philip IV., did nothing of the sort. Still under the influence of Olivares, he dallied at Saragossa, feasted and frivolled, wept when he heard that the French had entered Barcelona, and two years later, finding himself at Fraga, sat, as usual, for his portrait to Velasquez in the beautiful silver-spangled uniform he would have worn had he led his soldiers to battle.

The timidity and procrastination of Philip were to be our gain.

Why was Velasquez at Fraga? Because it was customary for the Kings of Spain to take artists in their train upon long military expeditions. Times have changed. To-day newspapers provide the battle artists, and Commanders hinder them from approaching the firing-line. Little of battle Velasquez saw in Aragon. No doubt he rejoiced, on setting forth, at the opportunities such a campaign promised for painting subjects wider in scope and more diversified than the eternal portraits of his monotonous King. His hopes were unrealized, and that must have been a grim moment in his life when at Fraga he was bidden once again to paint his Royal master, with the dwarf El Primo again playing tricks and making gibes to keep the Royal sitter amused in the hastily-constructed studio. Still something was gained. The chances and changes of the journey, the imminence of battle, the sense of affairs and history-making, the coming and going of dust-powdered messengers, and the decorative military uniform that the King wore, roused Velasquez, and inspired him to paint a gay picture.

Philip looks cheerful in spite of his troubles. His moustaches are well curled as usual; his hair is lustrous; the eyes observant; and, instead of the

plain *golilla*, a handsome embroidered collar falls upon his shoulders. Although the doublet is a gay rose-pink, trimmed with silver embroidery, so correct are the values that there is not the faintest suggestion of a scream in any part of the dress. The portrait might be called a harmony in wild rose and pearl, subtly inclining to saffron. A painter would rejoice in the broken colour in the lower folds of the doublet, and in the blobs of impasto that contrive the lights upon the sleeve. The technique recalls the painting of the lights upon the sleeve in Titian's portrait of Aretino, from the Chigi Palace. The craftmanship of the costume is true Velasquez; but the head is weak. It lacks relief. Possibly Philip was unable to sit often, and Velasquez painted the costume on a model.

M. Burger says of this portrait: "Le pourpoint est d'une rose carmelin; les manches dans tes tons de perle. C'est clair et tendre comme le plus fin Metzu. Chef d'œuvre de couleur et de distinction." Yet of the six people who roamed through the Dulwich Gallery during my visit, not one, I think, looked at this "chef-d'œuvre de couleur et de distinction," clear and sensitive as the finest Metzu. True, it is not well hung. Passing into Room 4,

it is possible to overlook the Fraga portrait in its modest place beside the entrance doorway. I would not have the Fraga portrait removed from its modest station, because in four pictures that hang in this room—one by Velasquez, three by Murillo, and one by Ribera—there is an object-lesson in Spanish painting that is invaluable and fruitful.

Ribera is a painter who demands and commands attention whether one likes or dislikes him. He is extravagant, he is violent; but he is strong and individual, as those know who have seen Prince Rupert's mezzotint after his picture called "The Great Executioner," and his "Locksmith" at the Dulwich Gallery.

Ribera was born twelve years before Velasquez. When Velasquez visited Naples, where Ribera lived, he met and held much converse with his countryman, whose works he had studied. If Velasquez was influenced by others as exemplars, or as instigators to bid him soar, Ribera, as well as El Greco, must certainly be mentioned with Tintoretto, Titian, and Rubens.

Murillo was nineteen years younger than Velasquez. To him he owed more than Velasquez owed to any contemporaries or predecessors. The

story of their meeting reveals the sterling and lovable character of Velasquez.

One day a youth of twenty-four, browned and travel-stained by his long ride from Seville, "looking like a gipsy with his thick, unkempt, black hair, mantle and hat somewhat the worse for wear," intruded into the Alcazar Palace at Madrid, timidly asked for an interview with Velasquez, and gave his name as Bartolomé Murillo.

Velasquez received his countryman, entertained him, gave his time and friendship. He explained the stages of his own success, and his method of painting; showed Murillo his picture of "The Water-Carrier of Seville"; gave him, in effect, the best advice; passed on his knowledge to the young sunburnt Sevillian; and obtained for him free access to the Palaces.

Murillo kept his visit to Madrid a secret. When he returned to Seville "his neighbours wondered where he had acquired this new, masterly, and unknown manner. They fancied he had shut himself up for two long years, studying from the life, and thus acquired his skill."

For long that view of "his neighbours" was held by the world generally; but Professor Justi, who tells the story lucidly and at length, makes it clear

that it was from the lips and brushes of Velasquez, his famous and generous countryman, that Murillo acquired his "new, masterly, and unknown manner."

Three fine examples by Murillo hang in Room 4 of the Dulwich Gallery—not the saccharine Murillo of the religious pictures, but the strong and direct Murillo, who had learnt from Velasquez how to look at Spanish flower-girls and peasant boys, and how to paint such subjects naturally in their own direct and reflected light.

There they hang in Room 4, those five pictures —an object-lesson in Spanish painting.

The catalogue of the Dulwich Gallery includes an old copy of "Prince Balthasar Carlos on Horseback." In vain I sought for it on the walls. An inquiry of the attendant elicited the information that it had been borrowed by the Royal Academy for the use of the students in the schools.

Here was further confirmation of the statement by the *Edinburgh* reviewer: "Velasquez is no longer merely an old master, he has become a living influence on modern painting; it is as if he had recently opened a studio."

I stayed until closing time in that room where the three Spaniards, so long dead, rest in fraternal companionship. My last look was at the richly

coloured portrait of Philip IV. It grows in intimacy the longer one studies it. That is the prerogative of all the works of Velasquez. He is not easy to know; but once you are admitted into his favour, age cannot wither nor custom stale.

When I returned to London, it occurred to me that I would spend the evening with Señor Aureliano de Beruete's work on *Velasquez* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1898), and re-read M. Léon Bonnat's introduction. So I made for the Art Library of the South Kensington Museum, where one can read under agreeable conditions of light, air, space, and attention unequalled in any public library in England.

It was good to be reminded of the whole-hearted appreciation of Velasquez by so eminent a painter as M. Léon Bonnat. As a youth he lived in Madrid, studied art at the Academy of San Fernando, and spent his leisure hours in rapt admiration before the canvases of Velasquez: "Je retrouvai chez mes jeunes camarades d'atelier les mêmes élans d'enthousiasme. Velasquez était notre Dieu. Nous connaissions ses œuvres par cœur, nous savions comment étaient peintes telle main, telle tête."

Twenty years later, when M. Bonnat returned to

Madrid, his admiration had increased, if that were possible. If you desire to know how eloquent a painter can be with the pen, read his technical descriptions of "The Infanta in Red" and the equestrian portrait of "Prince Balthasar Carlos."

The illustrations to Señor Beruete's book are all good, and three have a particular interest. They are etchings of the only portrait of Velasquez that is undeniably a portrait of himself, and by his own hand—the figure of the painter standing at the easel with the Cross of Santiago upon his breast in "The Maids of Honour."

This figure is given as an etching to the frontispiece of Señor Beruete's book, with two smaller etchings, delightful things, used as initial letters, that give a lilt to the pages whereon they appear. One is a little etching of the palette and forearm of Velasquez; the other, an etching of that wonderful right hand, a subtle and nervous suggestion of form rather than a hand, holding the long brush, paint-loaded, ready to touch the canvas, and leave its message upon his greatest masterpiece among so many masterpieces.

Tradition also indicates the following as portraits of Velasquez: the head with the plumed hat behind the chequered blue-and-white flag in "The

Surrender of Breda"; the dark, time-seamed face in the Gallery of Valencia; and the attractive half-length in the Capitol Museum at Rome. In this portrait he looks straight out at the spectator, a youngish man, pale, with thick bushy hair and dark upturned moustaches. The eyes are bright and keen, yet reflective, as if estimating the values of the thing seen.

It is the face of a man, loyal, straightforward, self-reliant, with intelligence in the eyes, will in the chin, and brain in the high, broad brow. In a word, it is the Velasquez that we conjure up from his pictures and the laconic accounts of his deeds—friendship to Murillo, loyalty to Olivares,—that time has spared.

CHAPTER IX

IN ITALY

In 1629, at the age of thirty, Velasquez, after many petitions, obtained from Philip IV. permission to visit Italy. The consent was accompanied by a gift of 400 silver ducats, and many letters of introduction.

Velasquez set sail from Barcelona in August, making Genoa in ten days. He travelled in the suite of Spinola, Spain's last great soldier, whose small head and firm features he was to reproduce years afterwards in "The Surrender of Breda."

An art student with leisure and a bias towards hero-worship might profitably follow the trail of Velasquez through Italy, and work as the Spaniard worked. In Venice, says Palomino, he drew incessantly, making studies of Tintoretto's "Crucifixion," and a copy of his "Last Supper." He was also "much pleased" with the paintings of Titian and Veronese. Raphael did not please him.

Leaving Venice, he travelled by Ferrara, Bologna, and Loreto—strange to say, missing Florence—and arrived in Rome the following year, where he was enthusiastically received by the Pope's nephew, and granted a suite of apartments in the Vatican Palace.

One infers from the account by Pacheco of his son-in-law's travel-year that he was not altogether happy in the splendid isolation of the Vatican Palace. It was out of the way, and he disliked being so much alone. I think he was a little homesick ; perhaps he missed the daily chats with King Philip. It was no novelty to Velasquez to live in a palace. He was on a holiday ; he desired to be free, with permission " to enter the Vatican when he wanted to draw."

Rambling one day through the outskirts of Rome, he visited the palace and vineyard of the Medici on Trinità dei Monti, that pleasant place, now the Roman annexe of the French Academy, where M. Carolus Duran, a devoted disciple of Velasquez, fathers the French students who have gained the Prix de Rome.

The situation of the palace and vineyard of the Medici so fascinated Velasquez that he begged Count Monterey to procure the Duke's permission

for him to reside there during the summer. It was granted. In the Villa Medici he lived two months.

As one walks through those gardens it is not difficult to imagine the tall, grave figure of Velasquez strolling in the cool of the day through glades shaded by ilex trees, with battered statues gleaming above dark hedges and great fountains showering water.

Some of the gardens of Italy all travellers know. Who can forget the Giardino Giusti at Verona towards sundown, with its cypresses, five hundred years old, imprisoning the night? Who can forget the vision from the garden terrace of "this blue Lombardic plain, wide as the sea," with the Adige flowing from its "enchanted porch of marble"? I have stood there and striven to discern all that was revealed to the magic eyes of Ruskin, persuading myself that I saw the towers and domes of Mantua, with water shining around them—Mantua, where Virgil was born: Virgil, whose nineteenth centenary drew magnificent lines from Tennyson:

> "Thou that seest Universal
> Nature moved by Universal Mind;
> Thou majestic in thy sadness
> At the doubtful doom of human kind."

Who can forget the view from the amphitheatre in the Boboli Gardens at Florence, which Shelley described; but there is no magic in Shelley's prose. Or the Villa Doria-Pamfili, with all its memories of Donna Olympia and Pope Innocent X., whose magnificent portrait by Velasquez still hangs in a little room of the palace, drawing all eyes, undisturbed by other pictures. Or the Villa Medici, where Velasquez painted the two small landscapes, companion pieces, that now hang in the Prado Museum at Madrid—those two haunting landscapes, the gravity and reticence of Spain impinging upon the sunlight and abundance of Italy.

The view in the "Garden of the Villa Medici" shows once again that it was the eye—never, or very rarely, the imagination—that inspired the brush of Velasquez. Imagine Poussin, who was living in Rome at the time, walking through the gardens in search of a paintable subject. Assuredly he would have passed this scene without any glow of appreciation, seeing nothing attractive in so commonplace a motive as a plastered wall pierced by an archway roughly boarded, with a wench hanging tattered linen over the high balustrade, and three casual figures

loitering by the boxwood hedge. No: this modest subject would not have flashed one spark from the dry, classical imagination of the painter of "The Plague among the Philistines at Ashdod,' and those lifeless heroic works which the citizens of Grand Andely, his native town in Normandy, have gathered in the Town Hall.

But this homely scene was sufficient for Velasquez. Under the sway of his sympathetic brush it becomes mysterious. Forlorn it is, too, as if he had brooded in loneliness over this unkempt corner of the Villa garden, finding, perhaps, in that desolate and neglected scene, surmounted by tall, dark trees, a correspondence to the sadness of his own exile.

There is no hint of the joy of life in these Villa Medici landscapes. The sun does not shine. They are sad as an autumn day. Beautifully in tone they are, of course; but I see in them the work of a man whose spirits were low, whose pulse was beating in adagio time. Perhaps he was already beginning to suffer from the tertian fever that at the end of two months compelled him again to change his residence.

His friend, Count Monterey, removed the ailing Velasquez to his own house, called in his private

physician, and gave orders that everything should be arranged in the house as Velasquez desired. There is also mention of "many presents of delicacies."

During his stay in Rome Velasquez painted his own portrait, twice mentioned by his father-in-law. Possibly it is the attractive half-length now in the Capitol Museum. He painted, also, two pictures which he carried with him to Madrid, the well-known "Forge of Vulcan" and "Joseph's Coat," the only work from his brush that remains on the walls of the Escorial.

In Naples he met his countryman Ribera, whose dark sculpturesque works thump from the walls of picture-galleries to-day.

From Naples Velasquez sailed for Spain. On arriving in the capital he hastened to pay his respects to Philip, and to thank his Royal patron for not having sat to any other painter during his absence. His Majesty, we read, was much pleased at his return.

For seventeen years Velasquez remained in Madrid, painting incessantly when he was not performing the duties of Director of the Works during the rebuilding of the Alcazar.

It was in connection with this post that he

made his second visit to Italy in his fiftieth year. Pictures, bronzes, and casts were required for the adornment of the Palace and the Escorial. Who so competent as Velasquez to select them? From Malaga he sailed early in January, 1649, and landed at Genoa on February 11. Thence he travelled to Milan, pausing in that city to examine Leonardo's "Last Supper"; then on through Padua to Venice, where he proceeded to purchase works of art, not very successfully.

Let us follow him to Rome. There he painted the portrait of "Pope Innocent X." that is still the wonder and the attraction of the Doria-Pamfili Palace.

It hangs to-day in a little room by itself, opening from the picture-gallery, honoured by separation, like "The Maids of Honour" at Madrid, and the Sistine Madonna at Dresden.

The walls of the Doria Gallery are crowded with pictures. You wander round them unmoved, conscious only of the open doorway admitting to the presence of the Pope. You pass into the *gabinetto*, and there is a living man—a shrewd, ugly, masterful Pope, history under a flashlight By this one red portrait Velasquez has stamped his red seal on the records of Rome.

One other portrait he painted during his second sojourn in Italy—that of his servant, the Morisco, Juan de Pareja, who practised painting in secret. This head of his servant was intended by Velasquez as a preliminary canter before attempting the Pope. His brush had been long idle: he limned Pareja in the mood of a cricketer who snatches a quarter of an hour at the nets on the morning of a great match. The head is splendidly modelled and painted. It created a small sensation when shown at the Old Masters Exhibition a few years ago. I quote a few lines of dexterous and convincing technical criticism from Sir Walter Armstrong's pen: "It is built up not so much by planes set side by side and then brought to a surface by half-tones laid upon them, as by a gradual reduction of the planes in successive paintings, according to the impact of the light. The brow, the cheeks, the hand, are domes built up by overlaid and constantly diminishing drags of the brush."

Velasquez despatched this portrait by the hand of Pareja himself to some Roman friends. They were amazed at the workmanship, says Palomino, "doubting which they should address, from which receive answer." It was exhibited, as I have

already described, in the cloisters of the Pantheon, and was received with universal approbation—"all else seemed painting, this alone truth."

Velasquez, being now assured that hand and eye were in working order, was ready to accommodate himself to such chance and fugitive sittings as Pope Innocent X. could offer him. That he was to paint an ugly man, seventy-five years of age, mattered nothing. Here was a figure of strong and dominating individuality, wearing robes that would afford an opportunity of indulging his feeling for colour, innate, but rarely called to expression by the dark and sober habiliments of the Court of Spain.

No doubt before beginning the portrait Velasquez had heard the gossip about the ugliness of this wary and saturnine Pope. Contemporary writers, says Professor Justi, vied with each other in their descriptions of his ugliness: his coarse lineaments; broad, heavy forehead; the lowering, almost malignant glance of the deep-set eye; the vulgar mouth and nose; the bloated and blotched countenance.

Little did Pope Innocent X. think when he allowed Velasquez to carry his easel into the presence-chamber and rapidly sketch his features, while the Holy Father was transacting business,

that the world two centuries and a half later would, through this portrait, know him as no other wearer of the triple crown is known. Many copies and replicas were made. "It was the amazement of Rome," says Palomino; "all copied it as a study, and looked on it as a marvel." Curtis mentions in his catalogue sixteen versions claiming to be either original replicas or copies; but the only one that is manifestly by Velasquez himself is the half-length at Apsley House.

It is a memorable experience to stand in that little room of the Doria-Pamfili Palace, confronted by this direct vivid, clamorous, and almost shadowless presentment of the Pope, without a hint of those pearly tones that are the charm of his children, or the gravity and reticence that distinguish his portraits of Philip. It is a red picture, with suggestive hints of purple and crimson in cap, cape, face, and curtain, relieved by the gold on the chair, and the whites of surplice, sleeves, collar, and the letter he holds in his left hand. But the head is the thing. The cunning, comprehensive glance of the blue-gray eyes holds the observer—hypnotizes him.

Pope Innocent was wise enough to admire the likeness. He was too old a hand in the ways of

the world to desire a pretty and comely presentment of his fierce and battered seventy-five-years-old face, upon which time had scored the gathered record of his days. In token of his approval he presented Velasquez with a gold chain and medal bearing his own likeness in relief.

If Velasquez painted no more during his stay in Rome, it was not for want of invitations. A variety of Romans, including Donna Olympia, Monsignor Camillo Massini, the major-domo, and the Pope's barber, wished to sit to him. There is no record of the portraits of these personages.

Having collected such works of art as were in the market and within the range of his instructions, he set out for Genoa, proposing to return to Spain through France; but Philip desired him to travel by the quickest route.

He dallied at Genoa. Philip became peremptory; indeed, sent an express command that he should return. Velasquez set sail forthwith from Genoa, arrived in Barcelona in June, 1651.

He was then fifty-two. Before him were nine years of quiet painting of masterpieces in the intervals of official duties.

CHAPTER X

IN BERLIN, VIENNA, AND PARIS

An arresting incident in the by-ways of one's art education is to happen upon a photographic reproduction of a picture, to be impressed and elated, and to look forward to seeing the original work. These anticipatory pleasures give a zest to life.

Such an experience was mine while strolling one afternoon down a narrow street in the neighbourhood of the British Museum. In that quiet thoroughfare is an excellent photographer's shop. I noticed in the window a large carbon photograph in a walnut frame. It was new to me. It was striking. It stayed my steps.

I stared at it for five minutes, passed on, returned, and entered the shop. I knew I should buy this remarkable photograph of a man, corpulent as Falstaff, arrogant as a hero of melodrama, humorous as a veteran low comedian, cynical as

an elderly aphoristic Frenchman, trampling upon a flag, with the light glinting off the snub nose and twinkling in the eyes that are almost hidden by the spread of the amorphous face. Yet he is a majestic creature—the face and figure of a fat man at a fair, informed with the dignity of Spain.

The thing is superbly done. Examine the drawing of the right hand clutching the mantle, the power of the presentment, the firm set of his bulk, steady as the supporting pillar, the rollicking humour of this dark-clothed swashbuckler.

"Who is the painter?" I asked the assistant.

"Velasquez."

"Where is the original?"

"In the Berlin Gallery. We have had five of these photographs, and we have sold each one within a few hours of showing it in the window."

I carried my purchase home with me—well pleased. That was some years ago. My interest in the portrait has not diminished. It is not the kind of work of which one tires. But is it by Velasquez? The authorities of the Berlin Gallery, who purchased it in Arezzo in 1873, think so. Mr. Henry Wallis, writing in the *Athenæum* on December 8, 1877, had no doubt. "Once seen never to be forgotten is the stupendous full-length

portrait by Velasquez. . . . There is nothing more humorous in Jan Steen, and in portraiture it is certainly unique." It is catalogued in R. A. M. Stevenson's work on Velasquez, and the blustering soldier of fortune smiles cynically from the pages of recent handbooks on the Master; but two modern scientific critics of my acquaintance are dubious. They acknowledge its power; but they maintain that the authorship is still *sub judice*. So will it remain; but if Velasquez did not paint it, the unknown artist produced a work that is worthy of the great Spaniard's signature.

Velasquez must have been acquainted with Alessandro del Borro, Lieutenant of Prince Matteo, commander of the forces of Grand Duke Ferdinand II. in the war against Pope Urban VIII. whose arms, golden bees, are embroidered upon the red-and-white flag that the corpulent Alessandro is dishonouring. He may have met him during his first Italian journey: he certainly saw this "very great soldier and captain," of "extravagant and versatile humour," when Borro entered the Spanish service, and was received in Madrid "with extraordinary courtesy."

Professor Justi argues that Velasquez would not have obliged an Italian soldier of fortune by paint-

ing him in the act of insulting a banner, captured in honourable combat, belonging to a family from whom he had received many favours. But Velasquez was an artist, the man with the pursuing eye, detached from his material, whose commerce was solely with the pictorial presentment, character, and disposition of his sitter. So long as the thing was good to paint, he cared not whether it was an ungrateful soldier of fortune, an ugly King, a faithful hound, a child with a complexion like the dawn, or a comic actor reciting his piece. What to him were the transitory quarrels of Popes and Grand Dukes? He was concerned with the things that continue, not with episodes of the moment. If it was Borro's wish to be painted trampling upon the golden bees embroidered over the red-and-white flag of his adversary, that wish revealed the character and disposition of Borro, and in that attitude Velasquez painted him.

Velasquez shows us Spinola gracious and courteous to his foe, because that was Spinola; he shows us Pope Innocent X. shrewd and crafty, because that was Pope Innocent; he shows us the horrid sight of the blind and grinning "Jester of Coria," because that was the Jester of Coria. And so on, and so on, through all his portraits. They reveal

what the eye of Velasquez saw. That eye had naught to do with ethical considerations. Its province was to peer through trappings and trimmings to what is vital; to select, to relate, and to state just as much as was requisite to give the character of the sitter. Consequently, we see Borro as he was—a great captain, unchivalrous and cynical, "a buck with a tendency to bound," one of those real, rare humorists who are able to regard themselves humorously.

Last year, finding myself within half a day's journey of Berlin, I took train thither, and drove straight to the Museum. It was a Sunday; the picture-gallery closed at four o'clock, and when I started forth the hands of the clock marked three. One hour! Long enough for an impression of the works by Velasquez at the Berlin Museum.

It contains four examples—the "Portrait of a Lady," supposed to be the wife of Velasquez, which I have already described; one of the "Dwarfs" attached to the Spanish Court; "Maria Anna, Sister of Philip IV."; and——

Well, one cannot miss "Alessandro del Borro" in the Berlin Museum. Nearly seven feet high, he towers up the wall of the first room, the point

of sight at his feet — a domineering, insistent portrait, that dwarfs all else.

It has little colour, less than the "Admiral Pulido Pareja"—a flush on the face, the yellowy-white pillar, the grey-green wall, and the bee-speckled, red-and-white banner beneath his feet. The light falls from below over his side, illuminating the right hand and profile, and flashing into notice the snub nose. Call it a humorous portrait if you like: I prefer to regard it as an example of the way a master can ennoble a subject that in the hands of an inferior painter would be comic.

It is a long journey from Berlin to Vienna; but to the Austrian capital the student of Velasquez must go. At Vienna repose, among other works, two exquisite portraits of a small Princess and a still smaller Prince, that would entitle Velasquez to be called the supreme painter of young children if the world possessed no other work from his brush.

Standing in the Maria-Theresia-Platz, I contemplated the new Imperial Museums, two vast and splendid buildings in the Italian Renaissance style, facing each other, the finest picture-galleries in the world. They could enfold our National Gallery in their wings. I looked at the façade of the im-

posing rectangle containing the Natural History collection, 175 yards by 77; then at the facing building of the same dimensions, containing the Art Collections of the Austrian Imperial House; and I smiled to think that I had journeyed all the way from Berlin to seek among the multifarious treasures of these mammoth buildings, lavish with sculpture, surmounted by a colossal bronze Pallas Athene—two pictures of tiny children. But he who made them was Velasquez.

The first day passed, and I had not found the children. The beauty of the setting of the pictures in the Imperial Museum, collected there from the Belvedere, the Imperial Hofburg, and other places; the splendour of the pictures themselves, masterpieces of almost every school in the world; the light from the blue Austrian sky, which bathed the pictures in radiance, held me. Four hours passed, and I had not caught a glimpse of the Velasquez children. It was plain that Vienna had not given them especial honour. I had come to the end of the fifteen large central halls, and was thinking that I would begin the exploration of the first of the eighteen cabinets, when I suddenly realized that I was standing in the main room, given over to the Eclectics of

Bologna. That ended my picture exploits for the day. The Carracci always drive me out into the open air.

Next morning I walked straight to cabinet No. VI., allocated to the Spanish school. There I found the children, overcrowded, not very well lighted, but exquisite: two portraits suggesting the quintessence of childhood, one white and frail as a lily, the other an opening bud, both with that artless air of unconscious seriousness, alluring trait of the child when it is making believe to play the part of an adult.

Has the head of a child ever been more tenderly and delicately rendered than the head of little Prince Prosper, the sickly child of Philip IV.'s second marriage, whose life flickered out just when he was beginning to walk, and to realize that he was heir to the throne of Spain? In the fragility of the pale face, the pathetic, dependent eyes, the shadows round them, we feel that Velasquez realized that he was painting half sprite of Death, half human child, one of that grey band who never gain a real foothold in the world. He toddles, a white figure, about that red-curtained room in the Palace, pausing at the sudden bidding of Velasquez. He rests his hand upon the back of

the chair, very good, standing quite still, a child of such small vitality that obedience came naturally to him. The tiny dog, a great favourite, it is said, of Velasquez's, keeps him company. The little left hand falls to his side, fingering the clean pinafore that almost conceals the rose-red dress. Look where you will, every particle of painting is masterly —the head modelled in half-tones; the white figure shimmering with faint reflected reds from curtain and carpet; the pretty baubles that hang from his waist, splashes of gold and silver that shape themselves into a rattle, a whistle, and a bell, the last playthings of this ill-starred little Prince.

Near by hangs his elder sister, one of the many versions Velasquez painted of Princess Margarita. Here she is quite young, three, perhaps four, years of age. She is as fresh and dewy as the cut flowers in the crystal vase upon the table. What a beautiful piece of painting—those flowers in the crystal vase! The colour of the background is a harmony of warm greens, blues, and reds; and in the middle she stands, sparkling, the touches of black in the lace accentuating the rose-pink frock, with its gleams of silver, jewels, and spangles. There are other pictures by Velasquez at Vienna; but the memory of these two, Margarita and

Prosper, remains—a flower that is fading, a flower that is blossoming, the most perfect representations of child-life floated upon a canvas that I can ever hope to see.

You will find a Velasquez—one or more—at Dresden, Frankfort, Munich, Florence, Turin, and Modena, also at Amsterdam and the Hague; but none is of the first importance. Russia has seven including two "Philip IV.'s" and a small replica of "Innocent X." Rouen has one—a dark portrait-study of a "Geographer"; and the Louvre has several, of which one stands out pre-eminently, the portrait of Princess Margarita, with the name printed in large gold letters across the top—"L'INFANTE MARGUERITE." She is older than in the Vienna picture, her fair hair is longer, her face fuller; but the large blue eyes and the breathless look, as if Velasquez had fixed her upon the canvas in an instant, would be Margarita, were her name not blazoned upon the canvas.

This portrait, which is thinly painted with a "light hovering brush," is the despair of copyists. Think of the French artists and writers, recoverers of Velasquez, who have studied her; of Theophile Gautier, who wrote the following "literary" criticism: "Through the artlessness of child-

hood, one feels in this delicate and pretty figure the dignity of one who knows her rank; she is a little girl, but this girl is a King's daughter, and one day shall be a Queen." Think of Manet and Regnault, those pioneers of the rush of painters to the feet of Velasquez, who probably dated their first enthusiasm for him from this portrait.

It was the last work by Velasquez I examined before starting for Spain. The long-delayed moment had at last arrived. Whether it be better to travel straight to Madrid and see Velasquez in the full power of his genius, all the mighty works of his later years outspread, or to follow my plan, and study him first in the picture-galleries of Europe, is a matter of opinion.

At any rate, when I left Paris for Madrid I felt that I had learnt something about Velasquez, and was primed for the great adventure of studying him in the city where he lived, painted, and died.

CHAPTER XI

IN MADRID

The time to visit the dullest metropolis in the world, as some call Madrid, is the spring of the year. I did not find Madrid dull. The wide, fair streets glittered in the sunshine, the air came freshly from the Guadarrama snows, and the amazing collection of pictures in the Prado Museum gave to my days among the Madrileños a zest, an excitement, that was renewed each morning. Moreover, this visit had been much desired. Long had I been preparing for the adventure — the immense emotional and intellectual adventure—of seeing Velasquez at Madrid.

The moment had come to see his life-work unrolled.

Before me across the wide, rutty road, where the Madrileños drive in the cool of the day, through trees, rose the huge brick and stone Prado Museum —the Mecca of the modern artist. I entered, and

passed through swing-doors into the long, narrow, central gallery.

The difference between the Prado and other galleries is this: other galleries offer you one, two, or three masterpieces by a painter; the Prado gives you a dozen. I could have stayed content the whole morning in that long dim gallery. There is a wall of paintings by the wild and witty Goya, who, dying in 1828, was to fuel the fire of Manet and other pioneers of the Impressionist movement in France; a wall of fantastic El Grecos; above all, in roaming down that long gallery, I came by chance upon Titian's equestrian portrait of Charles V., soldier-monk, who married his son to Mary of England, and died in a monastery. This noble work fascinated and held me, but not against my will; for now that I was so near the object of my journey, to see the real Velasquez, I lingered on the threshold like an introspective bather, who longs to dive, but delays, timidly questioning whether the plunge will give him the thrill he desires. For they had told me this and that in England: that the colour of Velasquez's great pictures at Madrid was disappointing, that the restorers had flayed them, that some had become ghosts of what they were. Yet, while I was looking at the Titians, the Goyas, and

the El Grecos, Velasquez was calling, quietly but insistently, in his own way of perfect breeding; for I had already passed and noted, over a doorway, reading it with a start, black lettering on a gold background, the word "Velasquez." Within that room, I knew, ranged chronologically on the walls, were nearly forty of his pictures, from his first piercing likeness of Philip IV., painted when he was twenty-three, to "The Maids of Honour," "The Tapestry Weavers," and his other third-period works, done when he had mastered his craft, when technique was no longer a labour but an intuition; when his brush magically modelled a cheek, indicated the curve of an eye, touched the shadow to life beneath it, and lo! there was the head—drawn. Would his colour be disappointing? The moment for decision had come. I advanced, and stood doggedly in the doorway of the Velasquez room.

Right before me, in the line the flight of an arrow would take, was the greatest historical picture mortal man has produced—"The Surrender of Breda." Velasquez not a colourist! The wall sang with the blue, tender but radiant, of sky and landscape, blue and gray-green, through which hints of yellow gleamed, across which the

smoke from the burning town blows, against which the conquering Spanish lances and the baffled Dutch halberds stand so boldly out. Not a colourist? See that flag behind the horse's head, a checkered pattern of love-in-the-mist blue and palest yellow, lighted by the falling rose pennant; see the Spanish troops, butterfly beings, butterfly colours, that pass in the sunlight between the gracious bending form of Spinola and the figure of the Dutch governor, Justin of Nassau, who is delivering up the keys of the city! This picture is essential Velasquez — the work of a gentleman of Spain of high breeding and exquisite courtesy, who feels the joy of victory half snatched away by the victor's sympathy for his adversary's defeat.

In the basement of the Prado is another version of this same scene by one Leonardo, a third-rate Spanish painter, wherein Spinola, caracoling on a horse, arrogantly receives the submission of the Dutchmen. It is the work of the ordinary journeyman painter, of a vulgar mind, to which the obvious at once presents itself. Every square inch of Velasquez's version shows his genius. You look and look, fascinated, ever discovering new beauties—the characterization, the knitting of the

figures together by the shadows, the atmosphere that interpenetrates the picture, and the larklike song of its passages of incidental colour. Reluctantly, at last I turned away, to have my eyes, in one swift, roving movement round the walls, again delighted by the Velasquez colour.

From the right wall outstarted "Prince Balthasar Carlos" on his playful pony; from the left little "Princess Margarita Maria," the darling child of Philip's second marriage, with the red ribbons shining through the handkerchief she holds, and the red rose in her left hand. The colour glows as a sunset, pale pink to scarlet, from bows and fallals, from the entrancing little red rivulets of colour that run through the silver and opal of her shimmering dress. And her step-brother, plucky little Balthasar, will ride always, in his atmosphere of light and luminous colour, holding you delicately and emotionally, like the sudden glimpse of a spring morning sky seen through the staircase window of a London house; there on the walls of the Prado he rides, and will ride, against that dewy blue sky, with the snow mountains behind, and his red sash flying in the wind. There he sits, stern, superbly placed in the saddle, the colour never forced, never harsh, just

blown on the canvas in subtle tints, where it was wanted. Enough! My first day with Velasquez in Madrid had given me a vision of his colour—reticent but lovely—that was not to fade.

One who should know has called Velasquez the supreme painter of children. That judgment was running through my head when I entered the Prado Museum next morning, and made straight for "Prince Balthasar" and "Princess Margarita." It was as a little girl that Velasquez knew her—a pretty, wilful child, piquant and fresh, big-eyed, as in the picture. The little lady, a wonder of rose-pink and silver, half unwilling to be painted, half amused, pleased, certainly, with the clothes in which her maids have dressed her, looks across the gallery to her small stepbrother, a horseman by instinct, like all his family. But there is no answering smile on his round, stern face. What are a girl's new clothes when one is astride a fine horse? With the bâton in his hand, he looks out solemnly over the land of Spain he was not to live to rule. How he grips the saddle! how the stirrup gives to the left foot! Look closely, and you will see that the stirrup and boot are but dabs and splashes of paint. Velasquez knew that the illusion of action and gesture is not obtained by

methodical finish. He was in a happy mood when he painted these children.

A few years more, and Margarita, with the pale face and the fair hair—"a little angel," Grammont called her, "as sprightly and pretty as possible"—was to marry the Emperor of Austria. And Balthasar, who was painted by Velasquez so many times, ever as if he delighted in the task—what of him? Well, we know he died at sixteen. His white tomb is in the children's Pantheon, deep beneath the high altar of the Escorial Chapel. You may see on the walls of the Prado the blue eyes and cross, rouged face of his betrothed, Mariana of Austria. Two years and a half after his son's death Philip IV. married her himself. And Velasquez was at hand, with his unerring brush, to paint them. It is impossible to say how many Royal portraits he painted. In some his pupils largely helped, the master giving the finishing touches; but when Velasquez worked alone on the canvas, then you have the real thing, as in the great equestrian portraits of Philip and Olivares. These equestrian pictures are magnificent; but it was the children who engrossed me that day—Balthasar on horseback; Balthasar with a gun in his hand (for he shot as well as he rode);

and the little dark-eyed girl who is known as the daughter of Velasquez. I found her by chance in the long gallery, and above were two companion pictures of Philip IV. and Mariana at their devotions, each kneeling before a cushion. I do not think Velasquez cared much what he painted—one day a King on a horse, or on his knees; on another the actor "Pabillos de Valladolid"! Can you not hear him reciting? Velasquez had an unrivalled genius for painting what was before him, for making the gesture of the instant vital. He looked, took his brush, and to what he saw gave life.

The outward events of his career we know; but the psychology of his character, the strain and stress, or agony, that may have gone to the growth of his genius, are hidden. Grave, detached, industrious, he moved through the years in magnificent shadow, developing slowly as an oak, perfectly sure of himself, unmindful of strange gods, and dying at the height of his power.

He was a citizen of Madrid; he painted in Madrid; the best of his works rest in Madrid; he collected and handled many of the pictures by other masters that glorify Madrid; in the country between Madrid and the Escorial you start to recognise the faithfulness of the landscape passages

in his pictures that he bathed in the clear light of the Spanish sky; you walk through the Calle Mayor and think of his first great equestrian portrait of Philip which was here shown to the admiring citizens; you go out to the Toledo Gate and see the road stretching away to Andalusia, along which he came from Seville. A company of soldiers passes, splashing through the mire. Hats are raised to the flag. The band is playing that slow, mournful National March in which all the past grandeur of Spain is enshrined. Any one of yonder group of idlers might have sat for one of the figures in his "Topers" picture, or for any of his Andalusian works. Nothing changes in Spain. Two soldiers with guns and swords still await the arrival and departure of each train. Nothing changes. Spain lives in the past; and nowhere is a section of that past more vivid, more actual, than in the canvases of Velasquez. They compel your attention and service. The splendour of Titian at the Prado (one small room contains six masterpieces) inveigled me an entire day from Velasquez; but the Spaniard conquered in the end. It was Velasquez, not Titian, who held me in Madrid for the week I had apportioned to Seville and the South.

It is strange to think that he conversed with Charles Stuart, afterwards Charles I. of England, who visited Madrid with matrimonial intentions, collected pictures, romped and rampaged with Buckingham, and sat for his portrait to Velasquez. One would give something for a record of the talk between these two, and for a sight of that unfinished portrait; but it is lost, and Velasquez was not in the habit of making notes of his conversations. A rarer prize would be a history of the companionship between Velasquez and Rubens, that hearty, ebullient Fleming, scene-painter of genius, who could bring himself to invent without a blush the Kirmess of the Louvre. When he was not laid up with gout, or splashing grandly on huge canvases, or making twenty-five elaborate copies of Titian's pictures, or adding a portrait of himself on a bay horse to his "Adoration of the Kings," he was in the company of Velasquez. You will read in the archives of the influence Rubens exercised over Velasquez; but that influence, like the influence of Titian, Tintoretto, and El Greco, was, as I have said before, suggestive, not imitative. He had but to tap another spring in his own nature, and out flowed the living water of creation. The power

was there; but Velasquez was the most modest of men, needing someone to say "Surely you can do it," till that later period of his life when, perfectly equipped, the deeps explored, he willed "The Maids of Honour," the head of "Martinez Montanes," and the bust of "Philip, Old" in our National Gallery. Surely most of the talking was done by Rubens. The man who could undertake to paint twenty-one huge pictures commemorating the marriage of Marie de Medici to Henri IV., and could carry them through without a brain fever, must have been a copious talker. Velasquez and Rubens journeyed to the Escorial, and, seated high up on the hillside, sketched together the "eighth wonder of the world," which had grown out of the bare Guadarrama slopes in fulfilment of Philip II.'s vow.

Did Velasquez enjoy the company of his Royal companions? Probably that of the children; but subject meant so little to him. Nothing, however apparently commonplace or canonically ugly, was alien to the sympathy of his painter's eye. Consider his dwarfs, idiots, and eccentrics! They hang in a group on the walls of the Prado—horrid little abortions, masterpieces of characterization, painted with the same absorption that he gave to

Philip or his Queen. And why did he paint them? Because they were part of life, and offered problems of light, and paint, and drawing. Philip was sick, or busy, or sulky; Velasquez was free—must paint. The dwarfs were at hand, and idle: he painted them.

One day he saw, somewhere in the purlieus of old Madrid, the two tatterdemalion old gentlemen whom he painted in his free, later manner, and christened "Æsop" and "Menippus." Here is character searched out and seized, the mental essence of these two types of the world's peripatetic philosophers transmuted into paint. Both have lived and suffered. The lashes of the world have stung their bodies, but only sharpened the edge of their natural wit. Each has turned his knowledge to his own use—Æsop (look at the tired, shrewd, kindly face of him) to the making of fables, so wise and simple that children can understand; Menippus to jibes, throwing them, accompanied by ironic laughter, at the world, which he liked so little that he left it, by his own act, through the open door. Velasquez must have read of this cynic philosopher in the pages of Lucian.

Companionable were horses and dogs to him. He knew their ways well, and painted them with

that touch of life which makes his animals as living as his Kings and Queens, soldiers and philosophers, women and children, beggars and buffoons, dwarfs and idiots. All had their value—the blind eyes of the idiot boy equally with the magnificent head and shoulders of the white horse that Queen Isabella of Bourbon rides, and the splendid hound that the dandy dwarf, called "Antonio of England," holds by the collar.

Velasquez is like the undiscovered companion in whom, in daydreams, one is always finding new and alluring qualities. He never palls; he never irritates; he never disappoints; he never flaunts his gifts. Failures, of course, he has—no one can describe the colour of his "Mars" or the colour of his "Coronation of the Virgin" by any other word than failure; and yet how unfair to use the word failure in connection with a picture that contains the sweet, pensive head of the Virgin! While still under his immediate influence, seeing his works daily, I found it hard to sift my impressions, to say that this or that picture was his masterpiece. Day by day a dozen different works claimed the honour, and I had only to sit for a quarter of an hour before either of them to feel that it had no rival. I could persuade myself in turn that the

glory of his achievement was the colour and nobility of "The Surrender of Breda"; the vivacity and draughtsmanship of "Prince Balthasar on Horseback"; the gaiety of "Princess Margarita Maria," called "The Infanta in Red"; the stir, glamour, and sunlight of "The Tapestry Weavers"; the modelling of the heads of "Æsop" and "Martinez Montanes"; the dignity and unpremeditated colour of the three hunting pictures.

"The Tapestry Weavers" has suffered more from the rough usage of time, and the experiments of the restorers. than the other pictures; or it may be that Velasquez is himself to blame for the cracks that disfigure this work. He employed a different technique to obtain the effect of vivid light, direct and reflected—a heavy impasto on a thick white priming. It would seem that the priming has oozed up through the cracks. Whether this be so, or whether the cracking is the result of the picture having been scorched by fire, these blemishes cannot detract from the vigorous beauty of draftsmanship in the figure of the girl with outstretched arm in the foreground, who is winding off a ball of yarn from the reel, or from the general effect of this picture of imprisoned sunlight. We look from the darkened workshop of the Royal

Tapestry Manufactory at Madrid to an alcove, raised two steps above the floor, where a piece of finished tapestry has been attached to the wall. Three ladies, possible purchasers, stand in the showroom, which is bathed in a beam of sunlight streaming through a window on the left. We may suppose that Velasquez, in his capacity of Palace Marshal, has conducted these pretty Court ladies to the tapestry manufactory; that the beauty of the scene and its pictorial possibilities has made a sudden and strong appeal to his painter's vision; and that he has retired to the dark end of the workshop in order to absorb the scene in one swift impressionist *coup d'œil.* He sees the figures in shadow; the dark walls on either side of the alcove arch; a faint beam of light falling through the window of the workroom, from which, perhaps by his command, the red curtain is being withdrawn; and beyond, in that sunlighted alcove, the Court ladies bathed in light.

The subject of the story on the tapestry is not known. A helmeted figure raises his arm. Before him stands a woman with hand extended, and to the right is another woman screening her face. This figure and the two flying Cupids are reminiscent of Titian's "Rape of Europa," and it may be that

Velasquez intended to pay a compliment to that master in suggesting the "Rape of Europa" on the tapestry.

Although "The Tapestry Weavers" has a particular interest by reason of its being Velasquez's chief essay in the rendering of light,—the whole gamut this time—I found that during the later days of my sojourn in Madrid my steps turned oftenest to that small room where "The Maids of Honour" hangs: alone. Here is the synthesis of all that Velasquez knew about life and paint, all that his eyes had absorbed, all that his strong brain had struggled with, all that was potential in his superb craftsmanship. In the height of this dim shadow-haunted room; in the easy and spontaneous grouping of the figures; in the exquisite blend of tones in the hair, face, and dress of the little Princess; in the illusion of depth that the picture presents, sending the eye back and back through plane after plane; in the extraordinary truth of the values, Velasquez proclaims, without effort or sign of labour, the mastery he had achieved. It is all so simple, yet so unapproachable. You see him standing at the easel in the act of originating this picture, probably looking at the scene through a large mirror, brush in hand, ready to begin; you

see the reflections of the heads of the watching King and Queen; you see the little Princess Margarita in a petulant mood, disinclined to pose, tired of having her picture painted. She must. The King has given the order. So her maids of honour have dressed her up in all her finery, with ribbons and bows and flowers, and brought her dwarf and her big dog to amuse her. But the little Princess will not be good. "Well, what now?" you can hear the King say to Velasquez. Ah! when Velasquez saw a thing he was never at a loss. Those searching eyes took in the whole lively scene of petulance, protest, cajolery; knew that it was good; and painted it just as it was—the momentary movements of a social eddy made eternal, moods and gestures caught as they flew. There it is, as if that family affair in the old palace of Madrid is just happening. To that small room in the Prado Museum where this picture hangs all who care about art go at some time or other. They look, and are very silent and wonder-struck.

It was not the fault of Maria Theresa, Philip's daughter by his first wife, that Velasquez died in the plenitude of his powers; but unwittingly she aided in his death. The story has been told in

the first chapter: how she was to be married to Louis XIV.; how Velasquez, in his capacity of Palace Marshal, was called upon to superintend the arrangements, and to erect the Conference House on that spot of no-man's-land in the river Bidasoa which divides Spain from France.

Velasquez started some days in advance; the Princess followed with her father in a cavalcade six leagues long. When the festivities were over Velasquez returned to Madrid, worn out by his seventy-two days' labours, and probably carrying home with him the germs of the fever from which he died a few weeks after his return. His body, "wrapped in the modest shroud, clothed as in life, according to the custom of the knightly orders, with the mantle worn at chapters, and the red badge on his breast," was borne by night with great solemnity to the Church of St. John; and there, with tears, they buried this Spanish gentleman, this great painter, who had no predecessor and who has had no successor.

The Isle of Conference, in the river bed, which in the days of Spain's greatness was 500 feet long and 70 feet broad, has now shrunk to a tiny sandy patch. It was the last glimpse I had of Spain. I just saw the spot of sand as the train rushed

past in the early morning; saw, too, in the mind's eye, the gallant figure of Velasquez, Spain's greatest son, who died doing his duty—doing it as he painted, as he did everything, with his whole heart, and supremely well.

CHAPTER XII

THE ESCORIAL

The Escorial is thirty-one miles this side of Madrid. Spaniards call it the "eighth wonder of the world." This carved mountain of granite, austere and simple, uncorroded, spick and span as the day it was completed, over three hundred years ago, is certainly one of the most impressive buildings in the world. It hangs on a bare, wind-blown slope of the Sierra Guadarrama, monastery and palace and church combined, a record, defying time, of the greatness of Spain when Philip II., its builder, that sullen and solitary figure, grasping the sceptre with one hand, clutching at the monk's habit with the other, held a lion's portion of the civilized world.

To-day the Escorial is a day's jaunt for the Madrileños, a breathing-place for tourists; boys play football in the courtyard. But when one of the Royal House of Spain dies, the Escorial takes

on, for a brief space, something of its former grandeur. Deep in the earth behind the high altar of the church lies the Pantheon, where the baby Infante Fernando, who died this year, rests with his ancestors, near to the dust of Charles V. and Philip II.; near to the dust of two of Velasquez's friends and companions — Philip IV. and Prince Balthasar Carlos.

On Titian's great canvas in the Prado, Charles V. rides eternally forth to battle. It was in compliance with his desire to have a burial-place for himself and his descendants that the Escorial rose from the desolate Guadarrama slopes. The workmen, burrowing in the earth behind the high altar, excavated the Spanish Pantheon. One chamber is for the Kings and Queens; others are for the children of the Royal House. The pantheon of the Kings and Queens and mothers of Queens—the men on the right of the altar, the women on the left—is an octagonal chamber, where rare marbles and bronzes gleam, scrupulously clean and polished, with twenty-six splendid urns, all of a size, arranged around the walls, blazoned with the names of the dust they contain. Intensely silent is this dim chamber, very simple in spite of its gilding and grandeur,

very august, like the great church above; like Benvenuto Cellini's marble crucifix by the choir, which hangs in a narrow passage, facing a darkened window. They open the shutters, and the bright sunshine floods and enfolds the marble, touching death to life—the Easter hymn.

The name of Velasquez is closely associated with the Escorial. It was due to him, "so far as regards its endowment of paintings," wrote the Prior Francisco de los Santos, that this Royal palace became one of the greatest in the world. When the mausoleum chapel was consecrated, the arrangement of the forty-one pictures in the sacristy was intrusted to Velasquez. Then it was that he composed the famous *catalogue raisonné*, or *Memoria*, of these forty-one Italian pictures. The *Memoria* disappeared. Great was the excitement among art historians when a printed copy was discovered in 1871; but the excitement simmered down when the document was examined. Either Velasquez was a poor writer, or the discovered *Memoria* is not from his pen. "The tone of these notes," says Professor Justi, "is laudatory, even enthusiastic and solemn. The terminology employed in the characterization is more æsthetic than artistic; it deals more with the impression

produced, especially on devout temperaments, than with the distinct qualities of representation."

This is not the tone and terminology we expect from Velasquez, and Professor Justi refuses to acknowledge the *Memoria* as authentic. I dismiss it, and think of Velasquez and Rubens sitting together on the hillside, talking of painting, and making sketches of the Escorial; and of Philip IV. riding thither with Prince Balthasar to show him the wonderful palace that his great-grandfather had built. Balthasar was then fifteen, and had already been admitted to the deliberations of the Cabinet.

It is not wise to visit the Escorial from Madrid in a crowded railway carriage, and to be galloped up the hill from the station behind a team of five excited mules.

The way I chose was by night train from Burgos, which arrived at the Escorial station just before dawn. The wind blew keenly; but there was a clear sky, and a prospect of an exquisite Spanish spring sunrise. It came, softly and tenderly, during the fifty-five minutes that I knocked for admittance at the hotel door. The mules dozed and the driver slept, I waited; time is nothing in Spain.

In one of the longer intervals of hammering at the portal I went up through the village street and climbed the hills, perhaps to the exact spot where Velasquez and Rubens sat together and sketched the Escorial. It was a wonderful sight I saw on that Spanish spring dawn. Slowly the great white buildings, containing 40 altars, 1,111 windows, 3,000 feet of fresco painting, and 89 fountains, dawned into form. The Escorial was shaped, legend says, by Philip II., in the form of a gridiron, as an act of gratitude to his patron saint, St. Lawrence. When the sun touched the towers, and began to flood the courtyards, I descended; found the porter of the hotel removing the shutters, and was casually admitted to breakfast. Perhaps because the day was young, and the holiday-makers had not yet swarmed out to the Escorial; perhaps because that vigil in the early dawn had set me in tune for vastness and simplicity—however it was, I found the great spaces of the massive Doric church more impressive than the crowded Gothic magnificence of Burgos. Mass was being said at the high altar; three beggars and an old woman knelt by one of the pillars; the sunshine streamed in through the tall windows; there was nothing to disturb the

simplicity of this austere dream of Philip II., proudest and cruellest of Kings and most devout of monks. Here he spent years of his life, always more ready to listen to his painters and architects than to his Ministers; here every morning at four o'clock the chants of the monks awoke him in his cell; here, when he felt his end approaching, wracked with pain, he was carried round in a litter to gaze once more upon the beloved building that was nearer to his heart even than the welfare of his empire; here he died, in the stall into which he could creep, without being observed, through a door in the wall—died in the act of worship, clutching the crucifix which his father, Charles V., had bequeathed to him.

You roam through the deserted palace, looking with distaste on the decorations with which succeeding generations have debased the simplicity of Philip II.'s dream; you turn your face from the tapestries designed by Goya, so suitable for the walls of a fashionable restaurant, so displeasing in these Greco-Roman halls: as out of place as Goya's lively frescoes are in the drab little church of San Antonio del Pardo by Madrid. The plain rooms, which Philip II. designed, have all been remodelled and redecorated to suit the florid

taste of other generations; but one little room has, by their grace, been kept unchanged. It is the bare chamber which Philip II. reserved for his own accommodation, wishing, he said, "but for a cell in the palace he had built to God." A cell it is. The hard chairs and the stool with which he supported his gouty leg are still preserved. The chirpy cicerone—who, I am sure, would like to commission the Spanish Maple to decorate and carpet this room, and hang it with some of the horrid tapestries from Tenier's least presentable pictures, which help to desecrate the palace walls —opened a door in the small bedroom adjoining Philip II.'s cell. It creaked back on its hinges; and there (I could almost touch it) was the high altar of the church, close to Philip's ear, so that he might hear and see the Mass when he was too ill to leave his bed. Strange figure! Half monarch, half monk! Sometimes a fiend, sometimes God-intoxicated, always "the most unlovable" King in history, until some young historian, who has himself suffered, arises to whitewash him.

"His bones are dust;
His soul is with the saints, we trust."

One more duty remained before I left this

white-gleaming building on the drab Castilian plain, this leviathan of architecture which Philip IV.'s great-grandfather built, wherein Velasquez displayed the pictures that he had bought on his Italian tours. It meant an hour's heavy walking under the noon sun; but the reward was worth the toil. I climbed up over the waste of rocks and unproductive earth till I reached the lofty seat, hewn out of a granite boulder, from which Philip II. used to watch the building of the Escorial. From his stone chair I beheld low-lying the turrets of this prayer in stone with which he strove to ease the spasms of his soul. Beyond are the hills capped with snow. All is desolation, save where the metals of the railway feel for their level through the plains—those background plains and snow-capped hills which Velasquez looked upon and painted.

He died. He lives. One wonders what this truth-seeker — unwearying and unruffled — would have thought of these two lines by a modern poet:

> "God came to me as Truth, I knew Him not;
> He came to me as Love, and my heart broke."

THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF VELASQUEZ

The following is a list of the principal works of Velasquez necessary to a study of his achievement. It is far from being a complete list of all the pictures ascribed to him, or by him, in the public and private collections of the British Isles and the Continent.

THE PRADO MUSEUM, MADRID

The Maids of Honour
The Surrender of Breda
The Tapestry Weavers
Philip IV. on Horseback
Philip IV. as Sportsman
Philip IV., with a Lion
Philip IV., in Prayer
Philip IV., Young
Balthasar Carlos on Horseback
Balthasar Carlos as a Youth
Balthasar Carlos as a Sportsman
Margarita Maria (the Infanta in Red)
Philip III. on Horseback
Queen Margarita of Austria
Isabella of Bourbon
Mariana of Austria
Mariana of Austria, in Prayer
Juana Pacheco, Wife of Velasquez (?)
The Daughter of Velasquez (?)
A Girl
An Elderly Woman
Olivares on Horseback
Antonio Alonso Pimentel
Fernando of Austria
The Topers
The Forge of Vulcan
Martinez Montañés
Cristobal de Pernia, called Babarroja
Pablillos de Valladolid
Don Juan of Austria
The Dwarf El Primo
The Dwarf Don Sebastian de Morra
The Dwarf Antonio of England

THE PRADO MUSEUM, MADRID—*continued*

The Jester Niño of Valleças
The Blind Jester of Coria
Æsop
Menippus
Don Carlos
The Villa Medici at Rome
The Garden of Aranjuez
The Arch of Titus in the Compo Vaccino at Rome
The Garden of Aranjuez
The Calle de la Reina, in Aranjuez
View of Buen Retiro
The Adoration of the Magi
The Crucifixion
The Coronation of the Virgin
St. Antony visiting St. Paul
Mercury and Argus
Mars

THE ESCORIAL, MADRID

Joseph's Coat

NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON

Philip, Old
Admiral Pulido Pareja
Christ in the House of Martha
A Betrothal
Philip IV. hunting the Wild Boar
Philip IV. in Silver
Christ at the Column

HERTFORD HOUSE GALLERY, LONDON

The Lady with a Fan
Balthasar Carlos in the Riding School
Balthasar Carlos in Infancy
Landscape with a Boar Hunt: a Sketch

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, APSLEY HOUSE

Innocent X.: a Study for the Doria Palace Picture
A Spanish Gentleman
The Water-Carrier
Two Boys at Table
Quevedo y Villegas

SIR FRANCIS COOK, RICHMOND

Two Peasants
A Spanish Beggar
Mariana of Austria
Portrait of the Artist (?)

MR. W. R. BANKES, KINGSTON LACY

Sketch for the Maids of Honour

The Principal Works of Velasquez

THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER, GROSVENOR HOUSE

Balthasar Carlos in the Riding School

A Young Man

DULWICH COLLEGE PICTURE GALLERY

Philip IV. (the Fraga Portrait)

THE EARL OF RADNOR, LONGFORD CASTLE

Juan de Pareja

Venus with the Mirror, from Rokeby Hall

THE IMPERIAL MUSEUM, VIENNA

Maria Theresa
Philip Prosper
Margarita Maria
Balthasar Carlos

Philip IV.
Queen Isabella of Spain
A Young Man holding a Flower

DORIA PALACE, ROME

Pope Innocent X.

THE LOUVRE, PARIS

Margarita Maria
A Meeting of Thirteen Persons

Philip IV.
Mariana of Austria

ROYAL MUSEUM, BERLIN

Alessandro del Borro
Portrait of a Lady

Margarita Maria
A Spanish Court Dwarf

ROYAL GALLERY, DRESDEN

Olivares

Portrait of a Man

STÄDEL GALLERY, FRANKFORT

Cardinal Borgia

OLD PINAKOTHEK, MUNICH

Portrait of a Man | A Young Spaniard

THE MUSEUM, ROUEN

Portrait of a Man, 'The Geographer'

AMSTERDAM AND THE HAGUE

Portraits of Balthasar Carlos

CAPITOL MUSEUM, ROME

Portrait of the Artist (?)

HERMITAGE GALLERY, ST. PETERSBURG

Philip IV. of Spain | Pope Innocent X.: Bust
Olivares | A Young Peasant

THE MUSEUM, VALENCIA

Portrait of the Artist (?)

UNITED STATES

Portraits of Philip IV. in the Boston Museum and in Mrs. Gardner's Collection

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